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(54) **POSITIVE DIRECTED MOVEMENT OF TERMITES BY RADIO WAVES AS A BASIS FOR CONTROL PROCEDURES**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **43/132.1**; 367/139

(58) **Field of Search** 43/112, 132.1,
43/98, 124; 47/1.3; 367/139; 361/232

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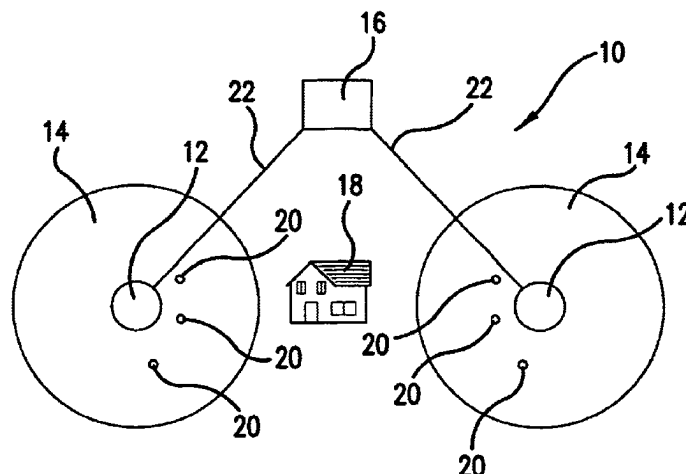
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A novel method of positively directing termite activity by the use of radio waves. Also provided is a method of protecting a natural or man-made structure from termite infestation based on termite attractancy of specific radio waves.

23 Claims, 15 Drawing Sheets



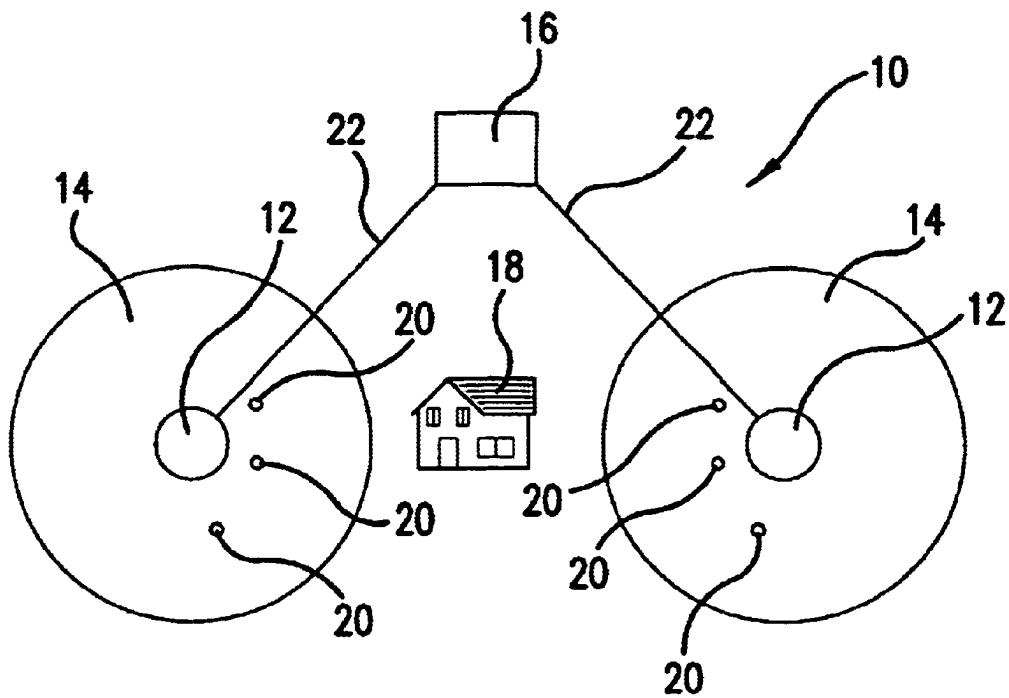


FIG. 1A

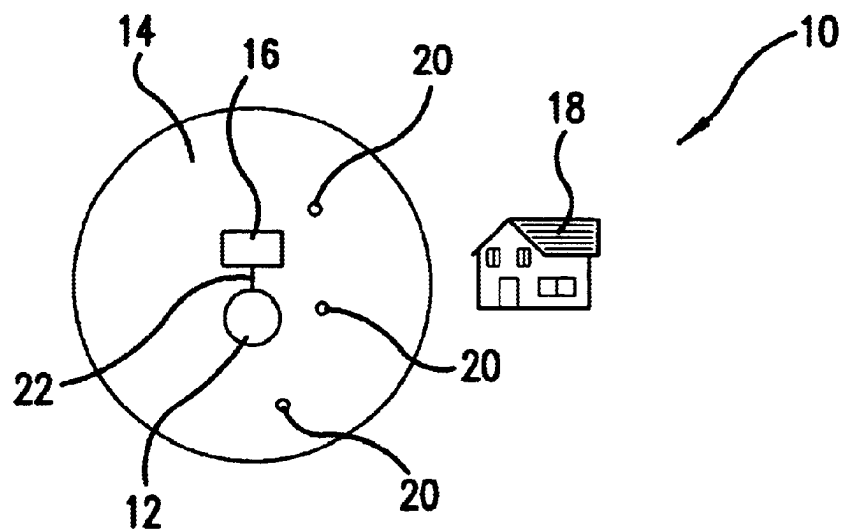


FIG. 1B

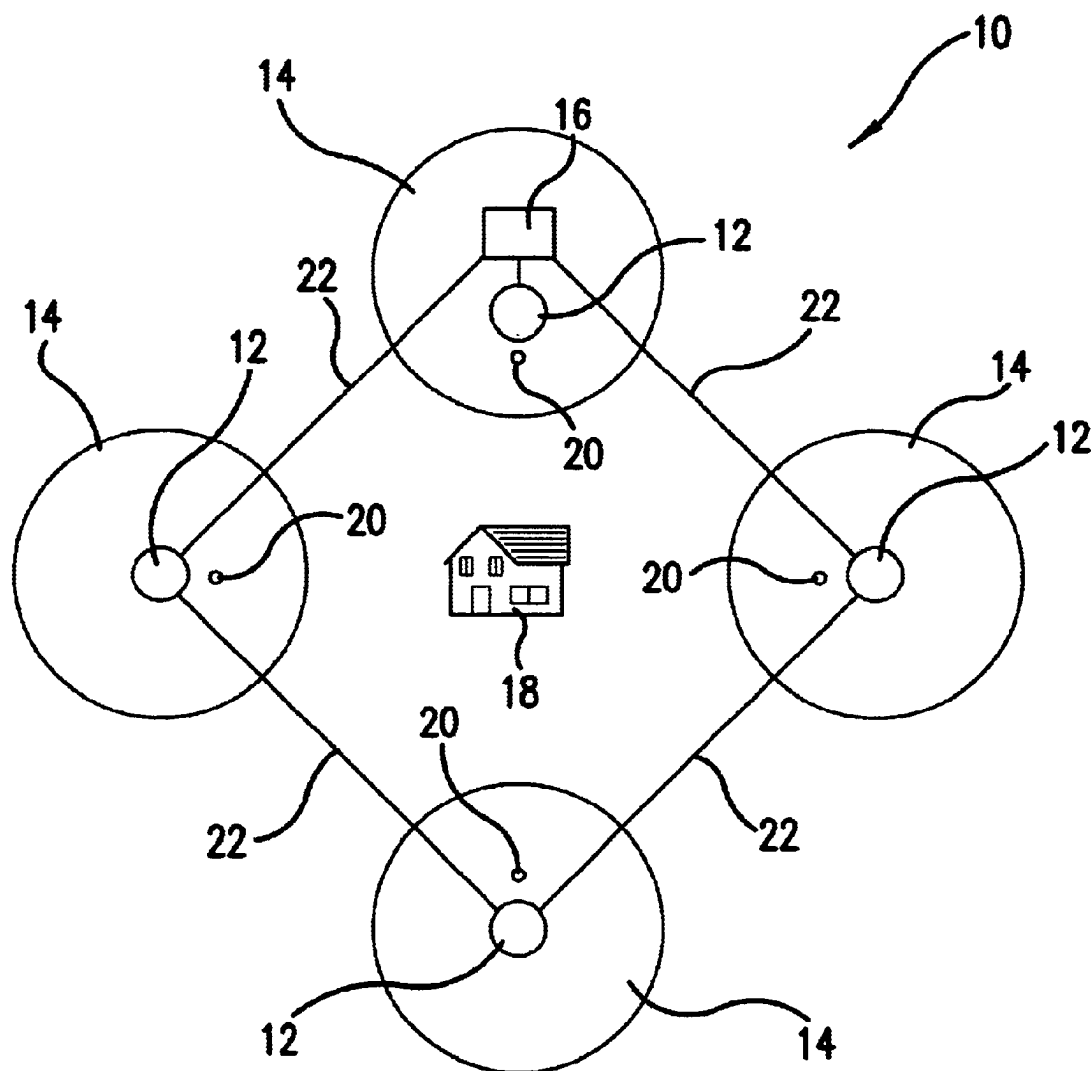


FIG. 1C

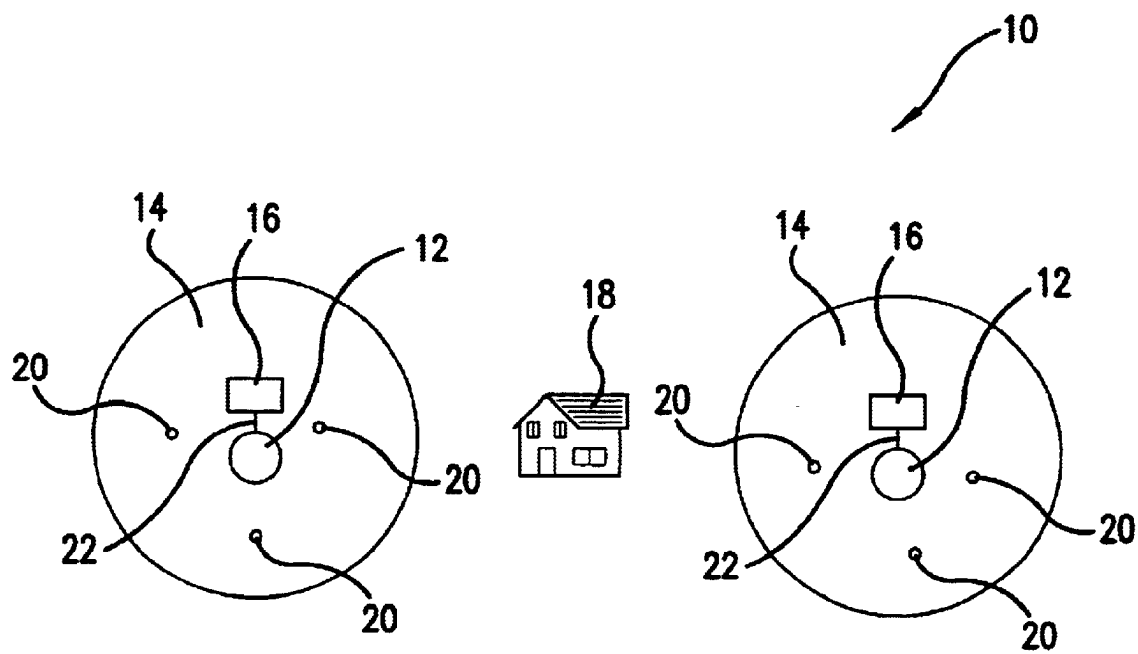
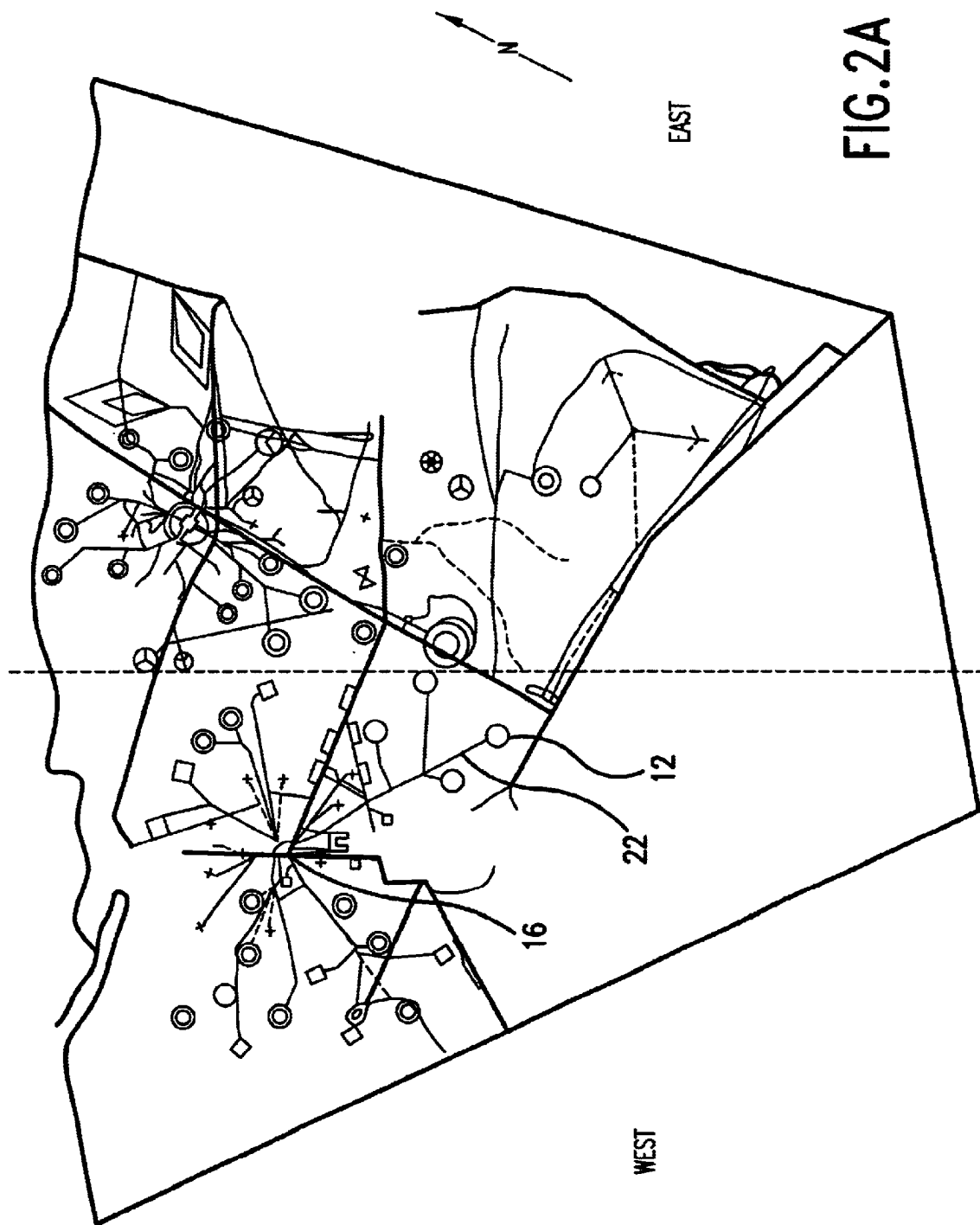
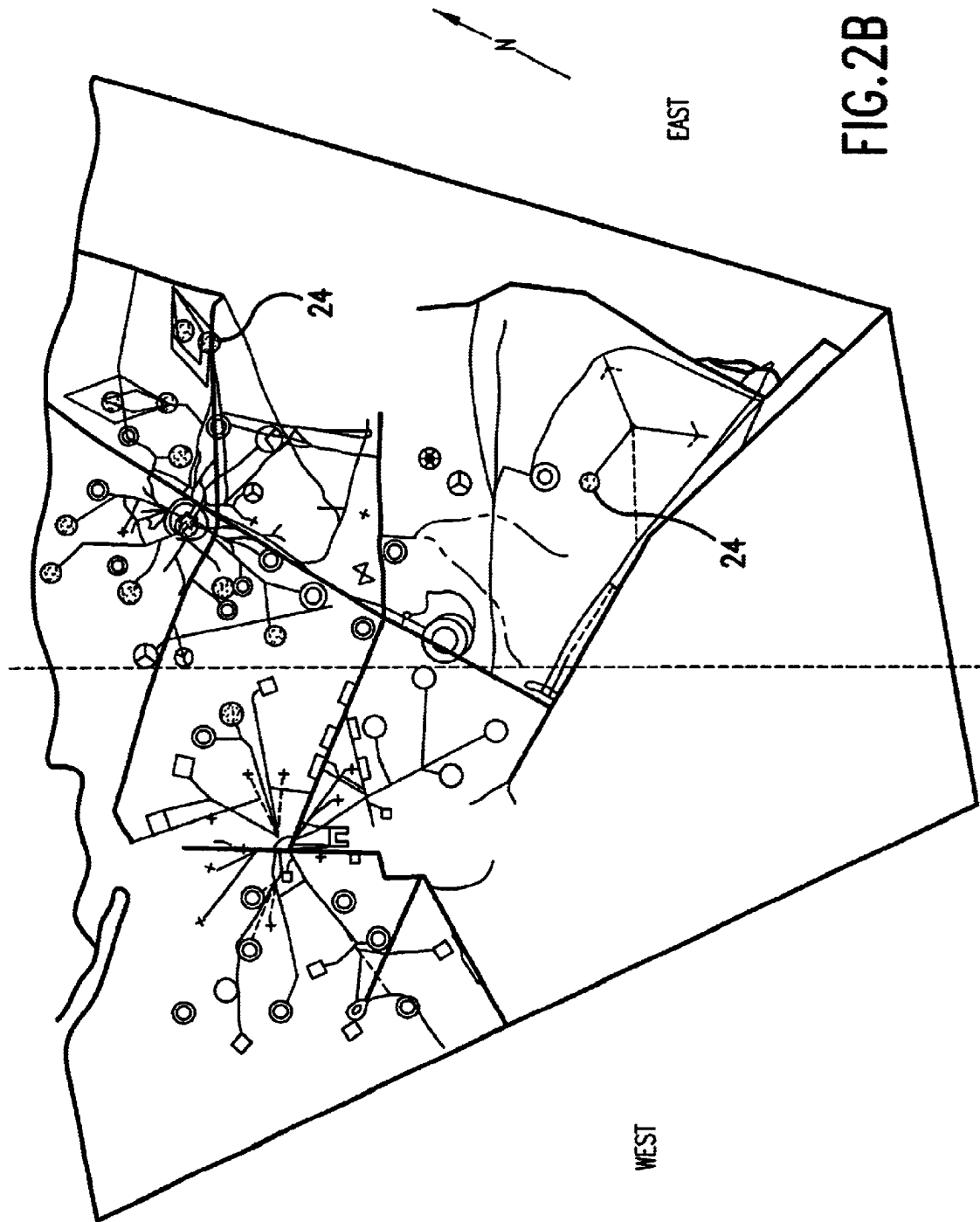
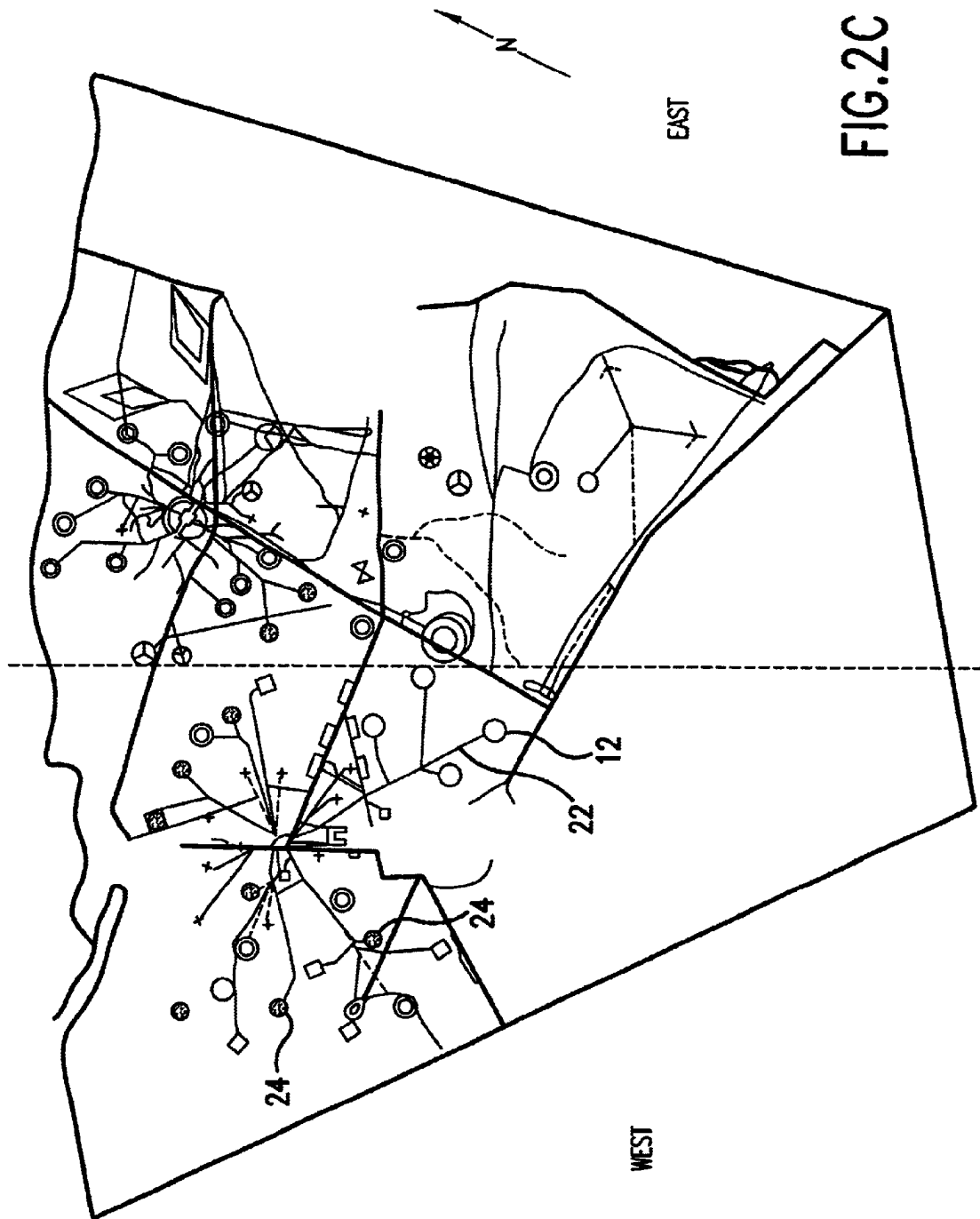
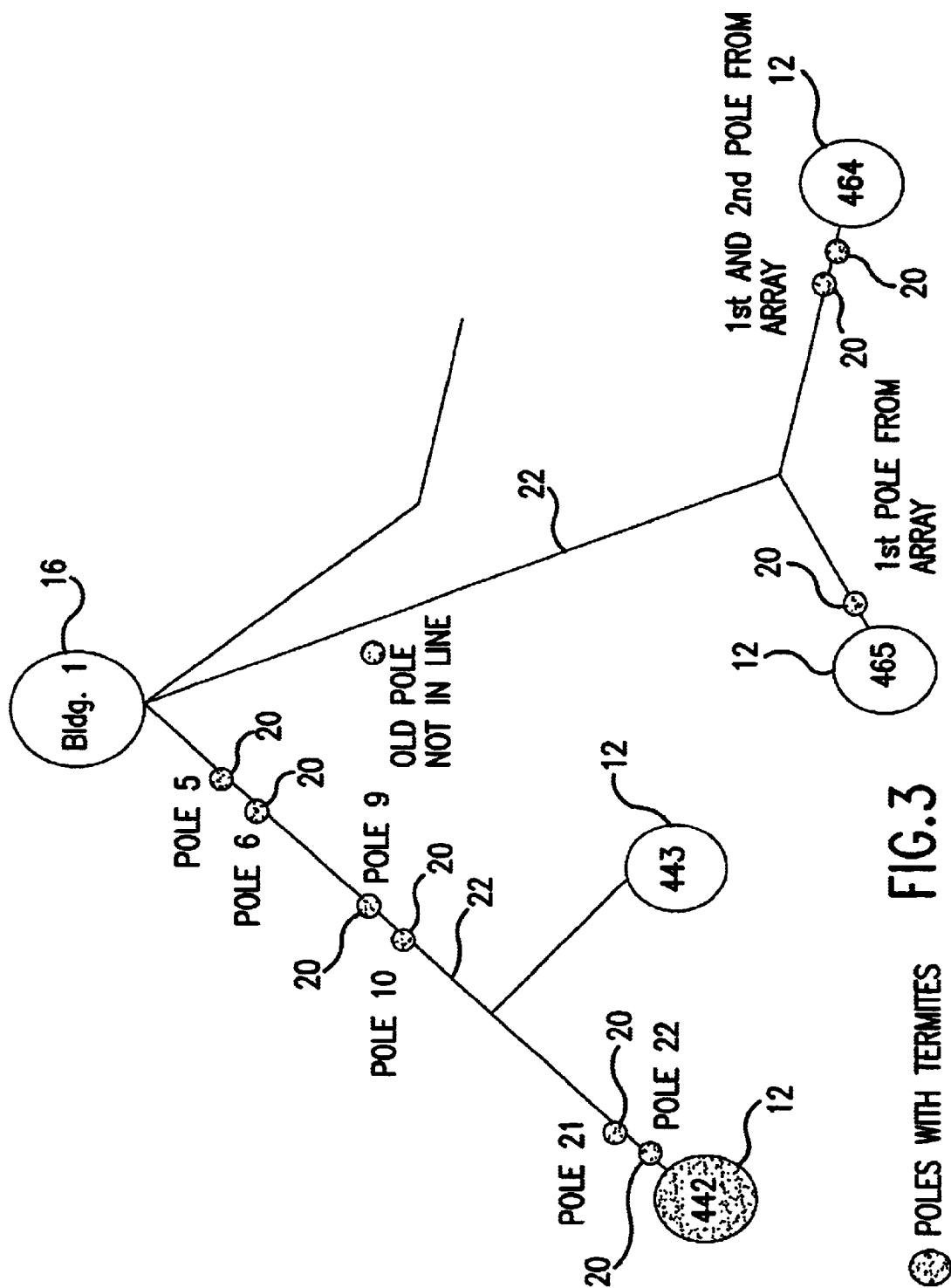


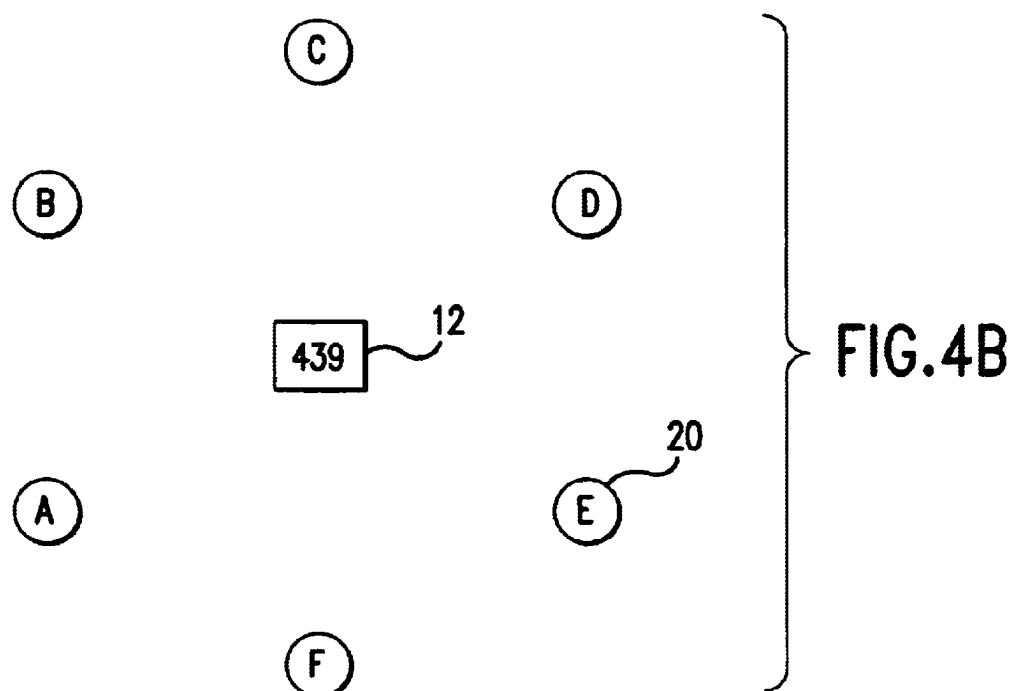
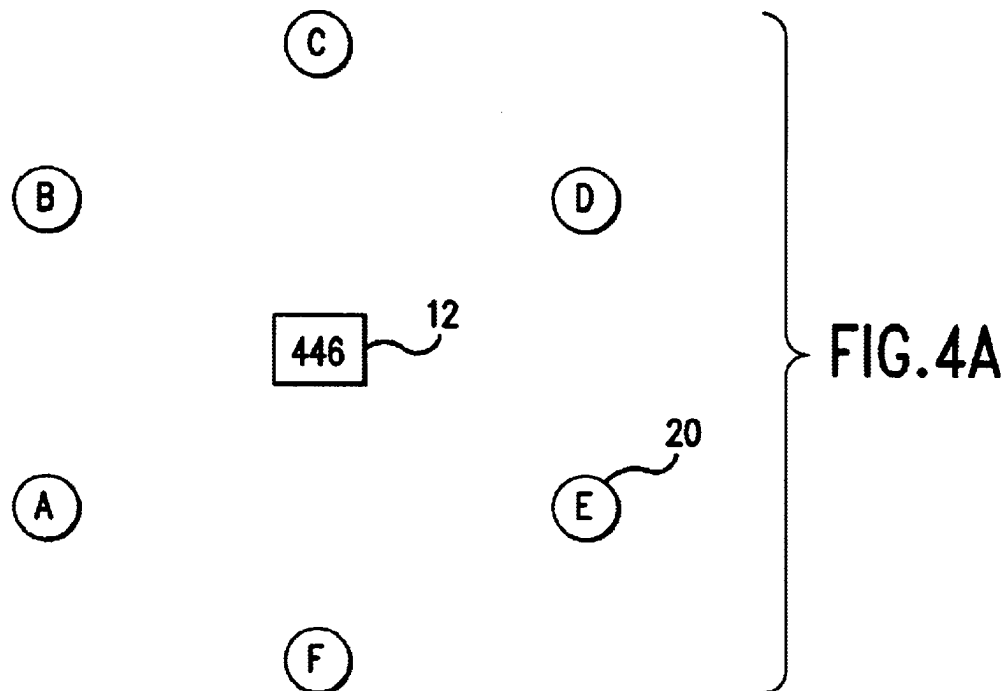
FIG. 1D

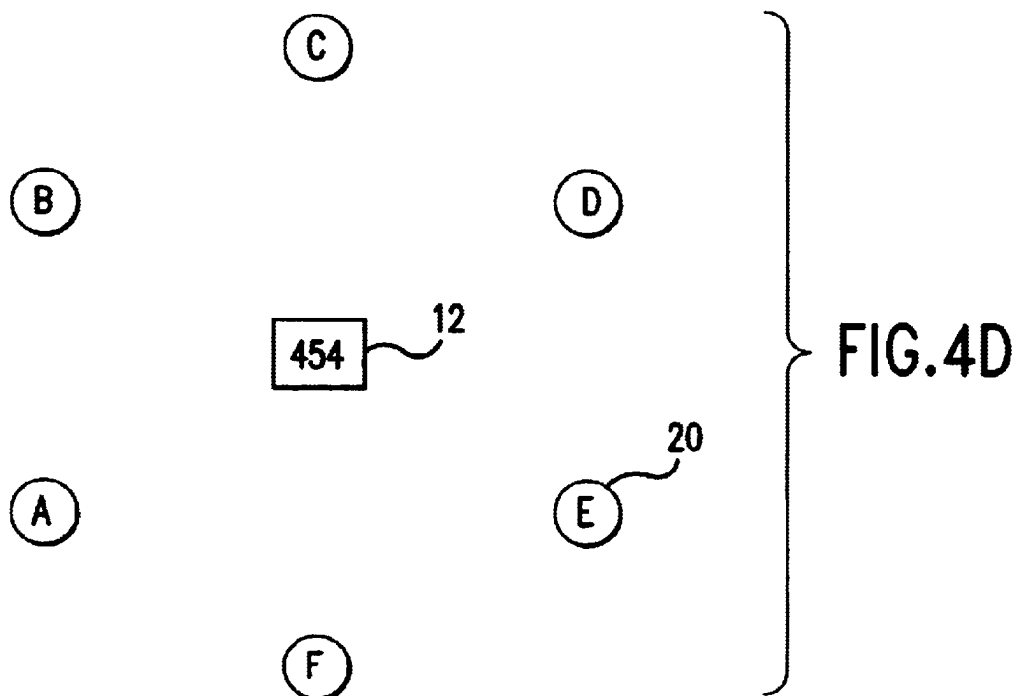
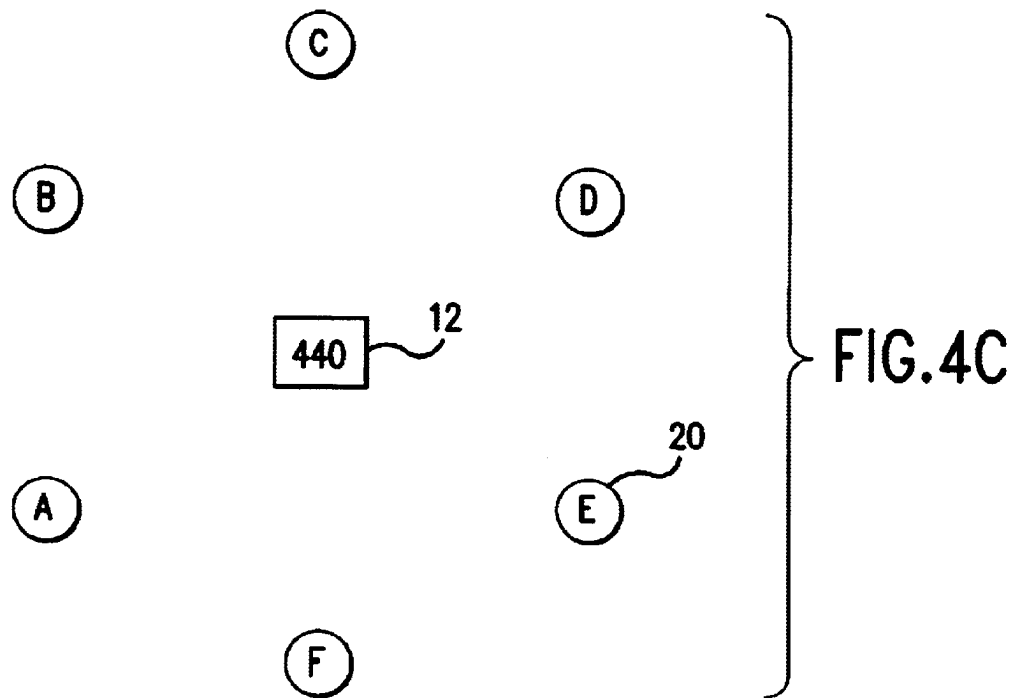


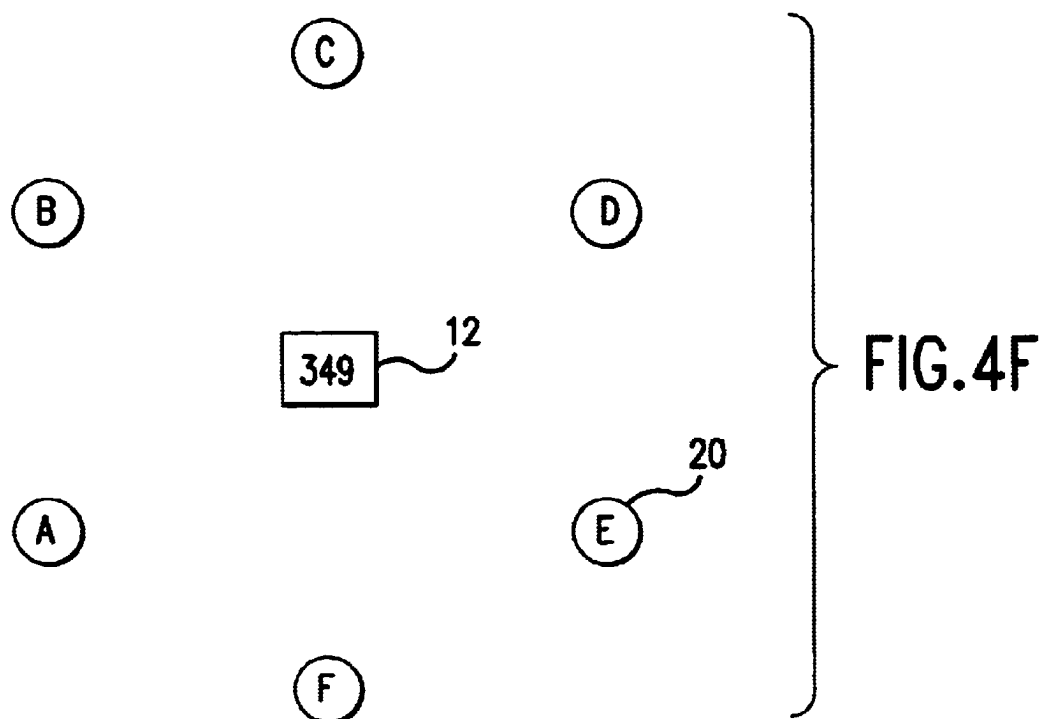
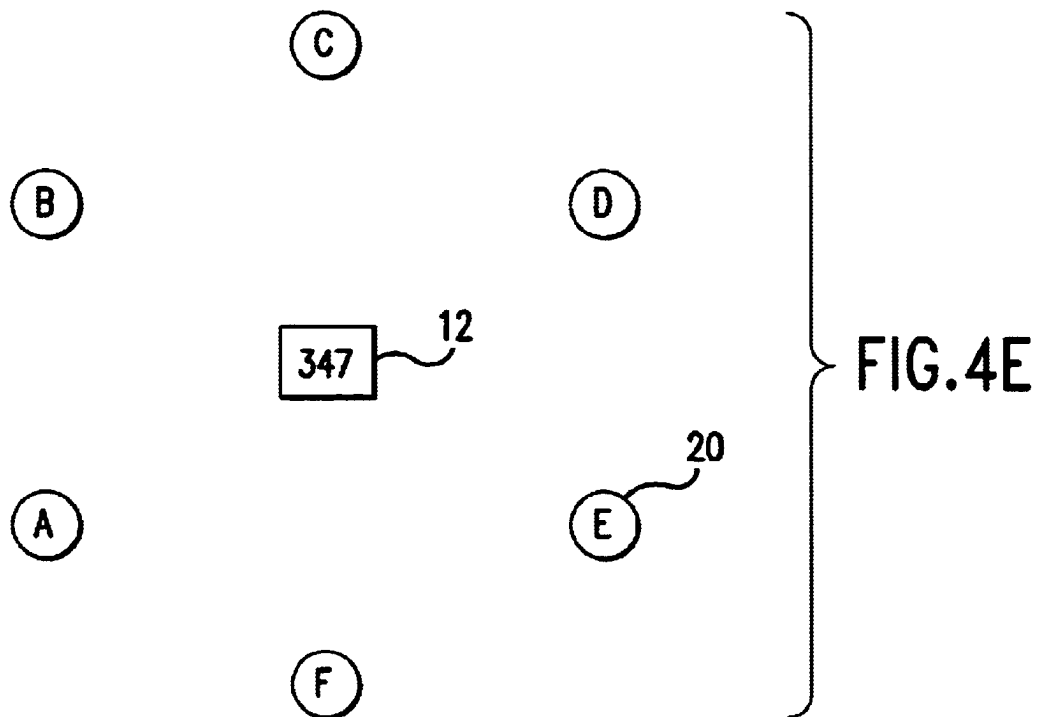


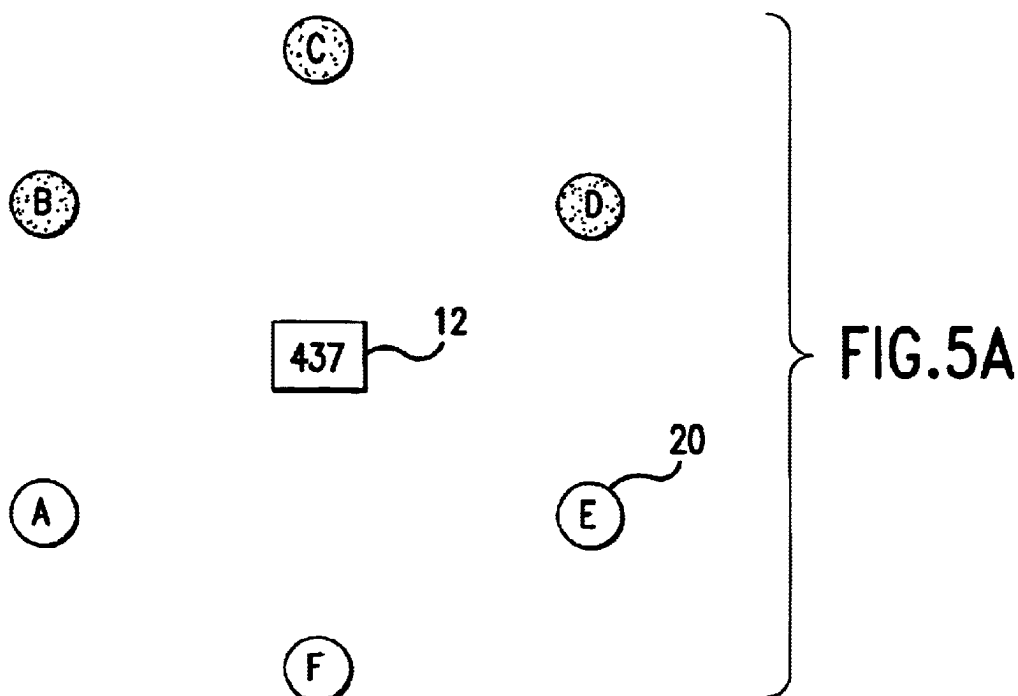
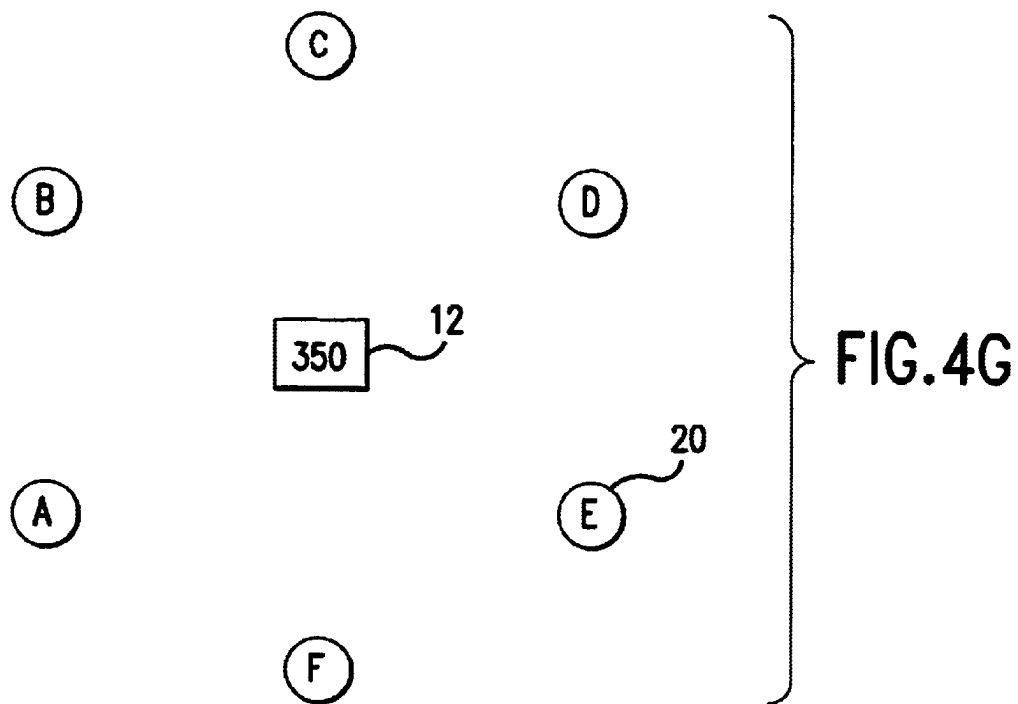


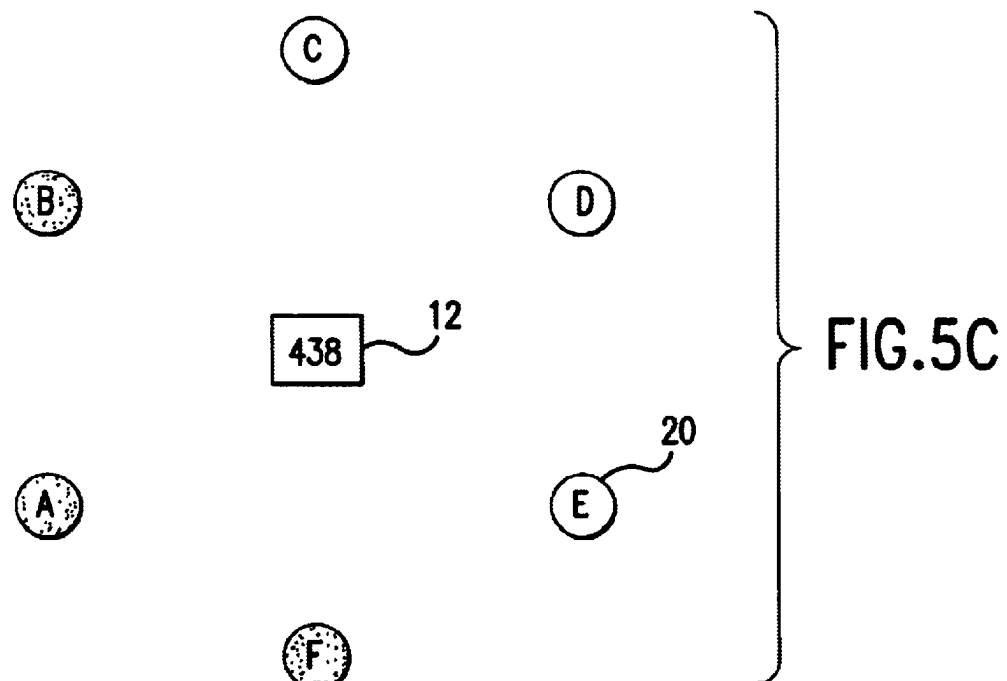
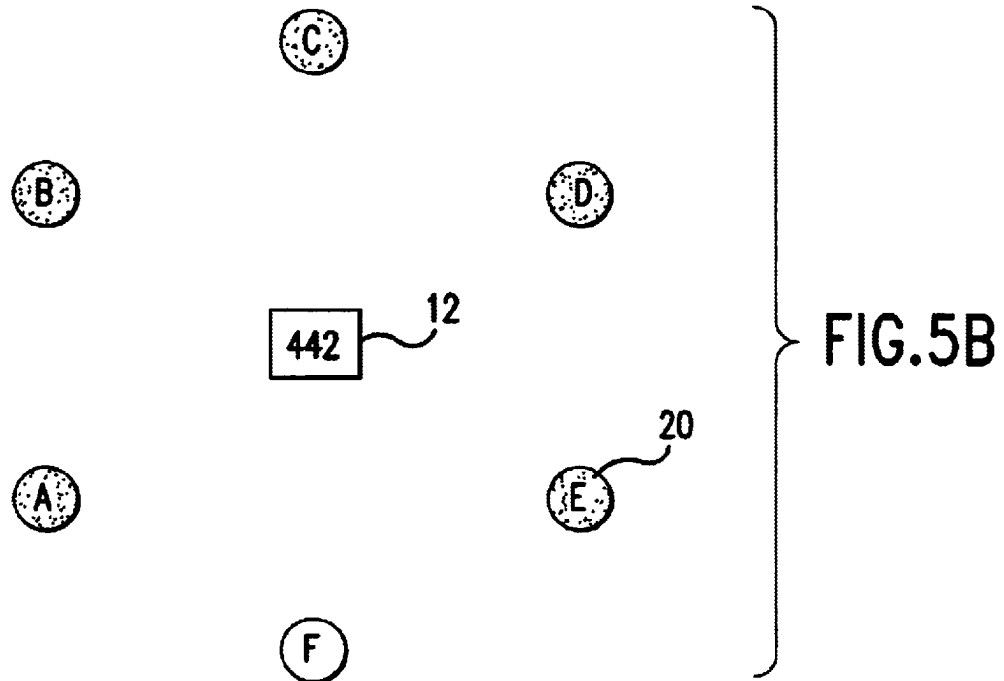


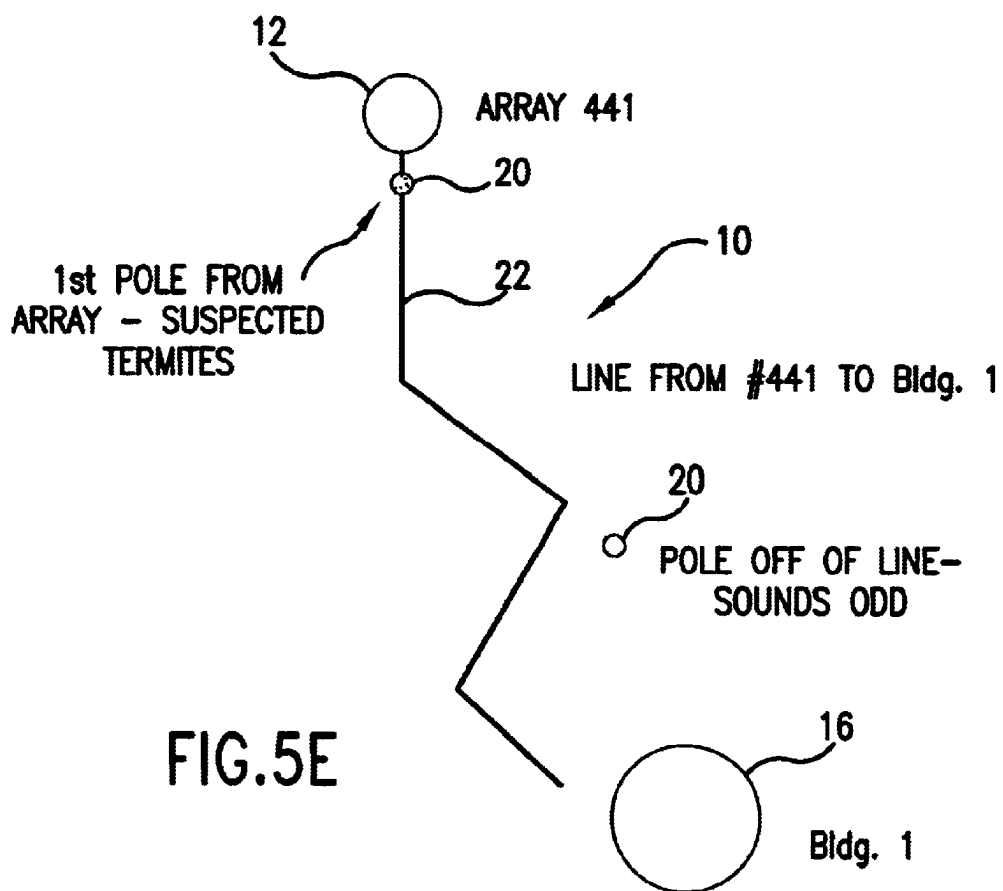
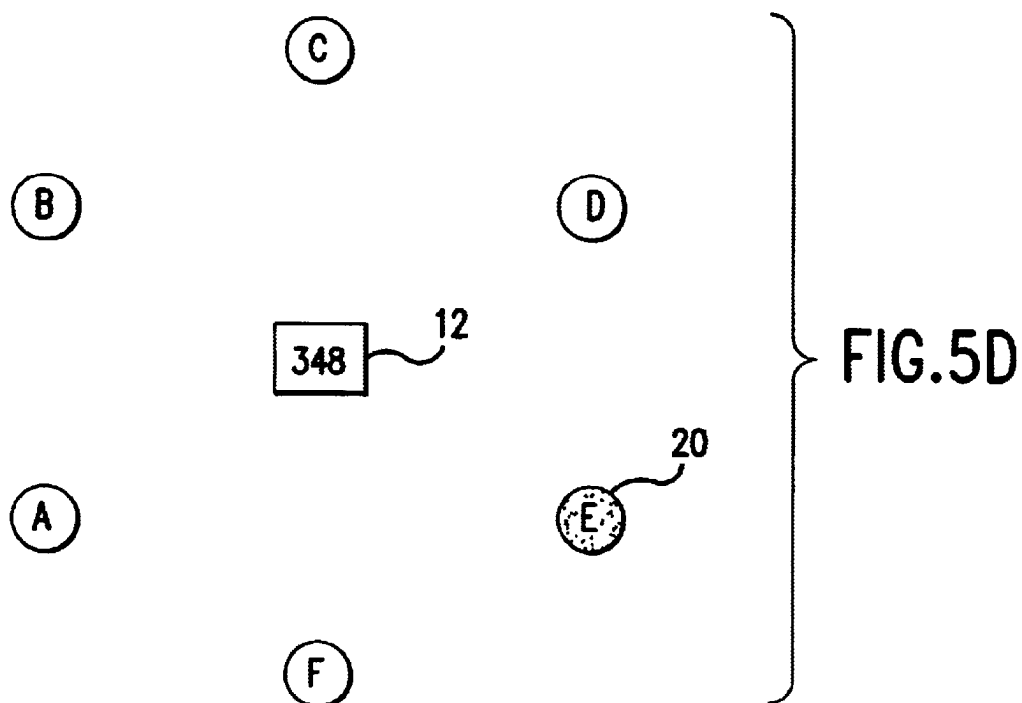


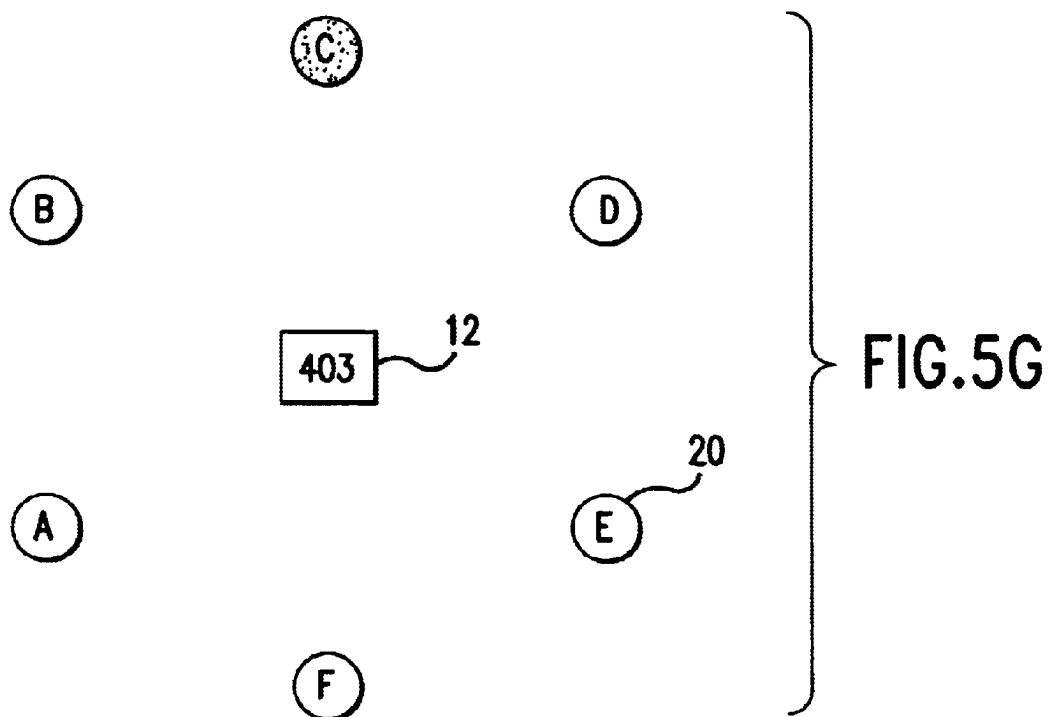
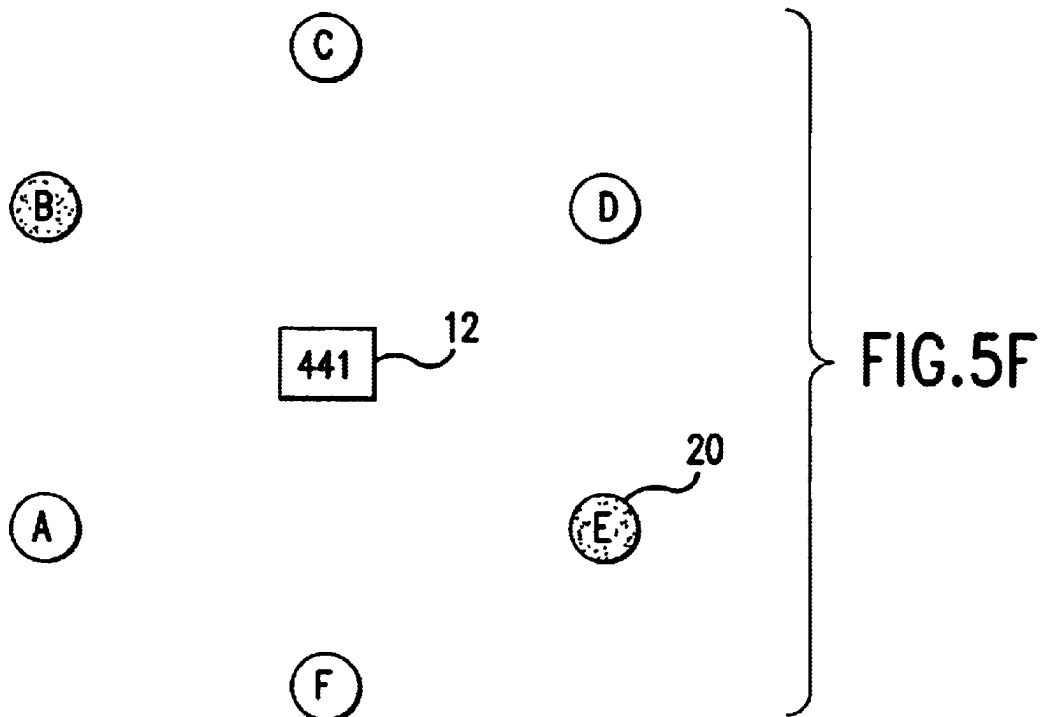


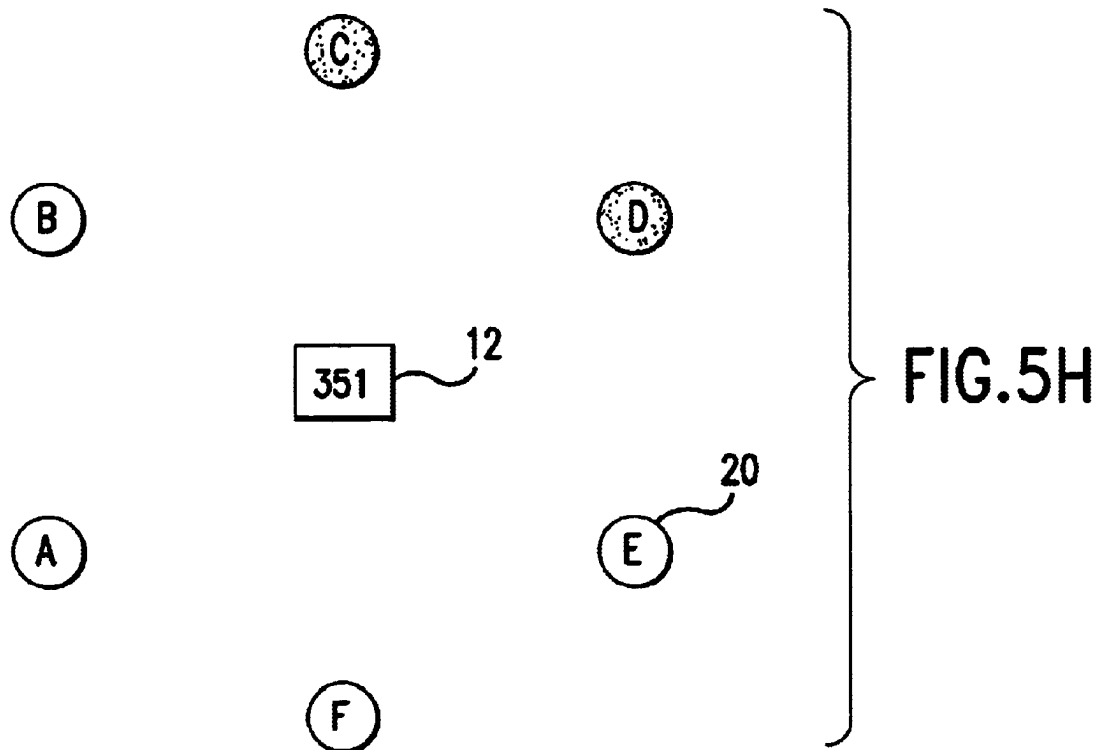












POSITIVE DIRECTED MOVEMENT OF TERMITES BY RADIO WAVES AS A BASIS FOR CONTROL PROCEDURES

This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/304,424 filed Jul. 12, 2001. The entirety of that provisional application is incorporated herein by reference.

This invention was made with Government support under 19-94-111 and 19-94-112 awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Forest Service. The Government may have certain rights in this invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to the field of termite control technology and more specifically to a novel method of controlling termite activity by the use of radio waves. More particularly, this invention provides a method of attracting termites to a desired location by the use of radio waves within a certain frequency range.

2. Background of the Technology

Untreated termite infestation in homes leads to irreversible structural damage in buildings throughout the world. As a result, a myriad of treatments to control or destroy termite populations have been developed. Because of the potential negative environmental impact of insecticides, environmentally friendly alternatives have been the primary focus of the latest research.

A significant amount of prior art focuses on the use of electromagnetic fields to control (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,473,836, issued to Liu discloses a method for removing insects from "hidden places" by inducing an electromagnetic field to create physical vibrations. U.S. Pat. No. 5,930,946 issued to Mah discloses a method for creating an to which pests react adversely. U.S. Pat. No. 5,442,876 issued to Pederson discloses a method for controlling termites by heating the area where termites are located to temperatures which are lethal to living organisms by means of electromagnetic energy. U.S. Pat. No. 4,870,779 issued to Bergerioux et al. discloses a method in which a low frequency, randomly varying magnetic field is generated by a device such that it interacts with the earth's geomagnetic field to eliminate (repel) rodents and similar pests located above and below ground level in the area surrounding the device.

The use of electrical energy has also been employed in efforts to eliminate (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,210,719 issued to Lawrence discloses an apparatus and method which uses a sweep-frequency, high voltage generator coupled to an applicator gun for feeding electric power into pest-infested dielectrics, for example termite-infested wood. U.S. Pat. No. 4,366,644 issued to Lawrence discloses a method that involves the application of broad band radio frequency or multifrequency high-voltage electrical energy to termite shelter tubes, galleries and nests and to the bodies of termites in those areas. Lawrence '644 teaches that by that method termites are killed directly by electroshock or indirectly by creating interference with the digestive processes of termites. U.S. Pat. No. 4,782,623 issued to Lawrence discloses an apparatus and phase-locked high voltage, high frequency pulse generator capable of "quasiunlimited" power output and an applicator gun for feeding electric power into pest-infested dielectrics, for example termite infested wood. U.S. Pat. No. 4,223,468 issued to Lawrence discloses a method that involves killing

termite application of broad band, high voltage electrical energy to habitats of termites.

The application of microwave energy has also been employed in the attempt to control (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,575,106 issued to Martin et al. discloses a method of using low voltage "microwave horns" to kill termite populations. U.S. Pat. No. 5,896,696 issued to Stokes et al. discloses an apparatus and method for generating and radiating energy at specific wavelengths for the purpose of adversely affecting the nervous systems of "small insects."

While recent efforts to discover environmentally friendly methods of controlling termites have sought to avoid the use of conventional pesticides; they have failed to adequately protect termite-susceptible structures from infestation. Both conventional chemical and more modern methods alike seek to deal with the problem of termite infestation by killing termites in the area that is infested rather than providing a method by which termite infestation and subsequent structural damage can be prevented. The inventors have discovered a novel method by which the application of radio waves to a selected area can attract termites to that area and thereby provide protection from termites for other adjacent areas.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a method of controlling termite activity by emitting radio waves that attract termites to toxic baits, light traps, etc. or directing their movements away from susceptible structures.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a system for transmitting radio waves of specific frequencies to an area where termite activity is desired.

It is also an object of this invention to use detection devices that monitor radio waves and/or energy levels of specific frequencies as a means to determine which structures are likely to attract termites.

It is also an object of the present invention to provide a radio wave transmitting system that is associated with proximately positioned termite bait stations, wooden stakes, wooden posts, or other termite-degradable materials to augment the termite attraction features of the radio wave transmitting system.

It is also an object of the present invention to provide a method of protecting termite-degradable materials of a natural or man-made character in a protected area by providing a radio wave transmitting system in an adjacent radio transmission area so as to attract termites to the transmission area and away from the protected area.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIGS. 1A-D show diagram representations of different example embodiments of the radio wave transmitting system of the present invention.

FIGS. 2A-C provide diagrammatic representations of the test area for the transmitting system of the present invention having both active and inactive transmission areas. FIG. 2A shows the disposition of antenna arrays within the test area. FIG. 2B shows the location of termite activity within the test area that were identified in 1998. FIG. 2C shows the location of termite activity within the test area that were identified in 2002.

FIG. 3 shows a diagram of antenna arrays associated with a radio transmitter and the location of wooden poles, which served as termite attractants in the area of the antenna arrays. The shaded areas indicate termite activity.

FIGS. 4A-G show diagrams of different antenna arrays and circumferentially positioned wooden poles for antenna arrays. The absence of shaded areas in the diagram indicates no new termite activity.

FIGS. 5A-H show diagrams of antenna arrays and circumferentially located wooden poles for active antenna arrays. The presence of shaded areas in the diagram indicate wooden poles having evidence of termite activity.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention as described below and shown in the accompanying figures is a novel method of attracting termites that is employed to provide a method of controlling termite activity by emitting radio waves of a certain frequency.

As best shown in FIGS. 1A-D the radio wave transmitting system of the present invention, generally shown at **10**, can be configured to position at least one transmitting device **12** in a transmission area **14** where termite activity is desired. A radio transmitter **16** is designed to provide a broadcast radio signal of a certain wave length within a transmission area **14**. As shown in FIGS. 1A and 1C the transmitter **16** can be operationally connected to more than one transmitting device **12**.

As shown in FIGS. 1A-D, the radio wave transmitting system of the present invention can have varied configurations where the transmitting devices **12** can be positioned adjacent to or circumferentially disposed around a natural or man-made termite-degradable structure **18** for which protection from termite damage is desired. The structure **18** can have a degradable component and therefore be susceptible to termite damage. The different transmitting system configurations depicted in FIGS. 1A-D are non-limiting examples, the pattern of which can be widely varied without departing from the concept of the present invention.

Within the effective range of the transmission area **14** natural or man-made termite-degradable materials can be positioned so as to provide an attractant **20** for termites that is localized within the transmission area **14**. Inclusion of the attractant **20**, in addition to increasing the effectiveness of the termite-attraction of the transmitting device **12**, also provides foci for termite infestation in the transmission area **14**. By focusing the relocation of the termites to the attractant **20**, subsequent containment, collection, or elimination of the termites by conventional means can be facilitated.

The transmitter **16** of the present invention can be any conventional radio wave transmitter capable of transmitting radio waves having a frequency range of about 1 to 100 megahertz and preferably 1 to 30 megahertz. The intensity of the radio wave transmission can be about

After conducting tests over a 10-year period, the inventors discovered that termites are attracted to radio waves within a certain frequency range and broadcast intensity. The inventors discovered that termites such as *Coptotermes formosanus* are attracted to radio waves such as those employed in the present invention. Species such as *Coptotermes*, *Reticulitermes* and other termite genera can be susceptible to the attraction qualities of the present invention. Unlike conventional remedial termite control methods, the present invention provides a method to control subterranean, surface, and dispersal flight movement of termites before infestation of an area in need of protection. The inclusion of attraction augmentation in the transmitting system **10** of the present invention further permits the localization of the termites within the transmission area. The

optional attractant **20** used in the transmitting system **10** can be any material to which termites can be attracted, to include, for example natural or man-made wooden items, bait stations, or any object with a termite-degradable component.

The present invention can be used to attract termites to the transmission area **14** for containment, collection and study, or elimination. By properly positioning the transmitting system **10** relative to a natural or man-made structure **18** for which termite protection is desired, the termites can be attracted away from the material or structure **18** that is to be protected and drawn towards the transmitting system **10**. Non-limiting examples of transmitting system configurations which can be used to provide protection for a material or object, such as a house, fence, utility pole, or any material subject to termite infestation are shown in FIGS. 1A-D.

EXAMPLES

Field observations of the natural populations of the termite *Coptotermes formosanus* on the Lualualei Naval facility, Oahu, Hi. were conducted over a 10-year test period. These field observations indicated that movements of this subterranean termite are affected by radio waves of a frequency about 1–100 megahertz, preferably about 1–30 megahertz, and more preferably about 2–20 megahertz. The intensity of the radio transmission can be about 1–100 kilowatts; preferably about 1–10 kilowatts. Antenna arrays were formed of wires supported by large pressure-treated Douglas-fir wooden poles and were located over a large portion of the facility. The frequency of the radio waves ranged from about 1–100 megahertz at transmission intensities from about 1–100 kilowatts.

FIG. 2A is a diagrammatic representation of the disposition of antenna arrays within the test area. In FIGS. 2A-C, the diagram of the test area is divided into an eastern and a western portion by a dashed-line. The locations of numerous radio transmitters **16** connected by transmission lines **22** to circumferentially disposed antenna arrays or transmission devices **12** are shown throughout the test area. Antenna arrays **12** in the eastern portion of the test area were actively transmitting radio waves during the first six years of the 10-year test period (between 1992 and 1998). Those antenna arrays west of the dashed-line were inactive for several years prior to the test period. After the inspection for termite activity in 1998, the antenna arrays **12** in the western portion of the test area were actively transmitting for the last four years of the 10-year test period (between 1998 and 2002). Numerous areas of identified termite activity **24** shown in FIGS. 2B and 2C as shaded areas were identified by the inventors during inspections in 1998 and subsequently in 2002. As depicted in the diagrams, new termite activity was identified in those areas where antenna arrays **12** were actively transmitting while new termite activity was not found in areas with inactive antenna arrays.

FIG. 3 shows a diagram of antenna arrays associated with a radio transmitter and the location of wooden poles, which served as termite attractants **20** in the area of the antenna arrays **12**. Identified termite activity at the attractant **20** is shown as a shaded area. As shown in the diagram, the inventors identified a high level of termite infestation of wooden poles **20** placed along the transmission line **22**, which operationally connects a remote radio transmitter **16** to the active antenna array **12** (antenna array number 442).

As discussed earlier, antennas arrays in the eastern portion of the test area were actively transmitting whereas antennas in the western portion of the facility remained inactive

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during the first six years of the test. Those active antenna arrays having the best attraction for termites broadcast a frequency of about 2–30 megahertz at an intensity of about 1 to 10 kilowatts. For those antenna arrays having the best attraction of termites, the average frequency transmitted was about 9 megahertz at an average intensity of about 4 kilowatts. The antenna arrays broadcasting in the lower frequencies and lower intensities can have an effective attraction distance in excess of 100 feet from the antenna arrays. The effective distance of the termite attraction effect of the antenna arrays is believed to vary with increased radio wave frequency and intensity. FIGS. 4A-G and FIGS. 5A-H provide an indication of the termite attraction effect of the inactive and active antenna arrays 12. Circumferentially disposed around the individual antenna arrays were wooden poles that served as an attractant 20 within the transmission area 14. These attractant poles 20 provided a foci for the termites attracted by the antenna arrays system of the present invention and permitted the inventors to measure the effect of the transmitted radio waves. In FIGS. 4A-G and FIGS. 5A-H, it can be seen that the attractant poles 20 that were disposed near active antenna arrays 12 were observed to have different amounts of termite infestation while those inactive antenna arrays 12 had reduced or no termite infestation.

The results of the years of testing the radio wave transmitting system 10 of the present invention demonstrated the ability of the system to attract termites by the use of radio wave transmission. The test also showed that by attracting termites to the transmitting system 10, adjacent wooden structures could be protected from termite infestation.

The present invention can be employed to attract termites to an active transmitting device 12 and by doing so protect an adjacent area from termite infestation. The invention can also be employed as a method to increase the efficiency of other devices used to attract insects such as the conventional light traps, termite traps, bait stations and the like.

It is also within the concept of the present invention to employ the inventor's discovery of the termite-attractant ability of a radio wave transmitting system 10 to provide an electronic sweeper that can identify structures or buildings that are more susceptible to termite infestation due to the emission of attractant radio waves.

The discovery of the inventors can also be used to provide a device that scrambles or "masks" the emission of attractant radio waves from termite susceptible structures or buildings.

The inventors have also determined that the effect of radio waves on termites can be adapted to produce a high intensity electronic field at or about 60 hertz and 20 megawatts to create a repellent shield around susceptible structures.

The invention claimed herein has been described generically, and by reference to specific embodiments. Examples and specific features are not intended to be limiting unless so indicated above. Modifications will occur to those of skill in the art without departing from the invention, except as excluded by the claims set forth below.

What is claimed is:

1. A radio wave transmitting system for the purpose of rendering an area comprising a termite-degradable structure susceptible to termite damage substantially free of termites, said transmitting system comprising:

at least two termite attractants, a first termite attractant and at least one additional termite attractant, said at least two termite attractants being placeable at a first location, said first termite attractant comprising a radio wave transmitter operationally connected to at least one

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transmitting device, which said device transmits waves generated by said transmitter of a frequency and intensity that attracts termites, said device disposable with respect to a second location having said structure susceptible to termite damage so as to attract termites to said first location and away from said second location and, said device having an effective area that includes at least a portion of said first location, and said at least one additional termite attractant comprising a termite degradable material, wherein said radio wave transmitting system and said at least one additional termite attractant serve to attract termites away from said structure leaving said structure substantially free of termites.

2. The radio wave transmitting system of claim 1, wherein said radio wave frequency is about 1 to 100 megahertz.

3. The radio wave transmitting system of claim 2, wherein said radio transmitter transmits with an intensity of about 1 to 100 kilowatts.

4. The radio wave transmitting system of claim 1, wherein said radio wave frequency is about 1 to 30 megahertz.

5. The radio wave transmitting system of claim 4, wherein said radio transmitter transmits with an intensity of about 1 to 10 kilowatts.

6. The radio wave transmitting system of claim 1, wherein said frequency is about 1–30 megahertz and said intensity is about 1–100 kilowatts.

7. The radio wave transmitting system of claim 1, wherein said at least one transmitting device comprises an antenna which is mountable on or adjacent to said at least one additional termite attractant which serves as an attractant to termites.

8. A method of controlling termite activity comprising: providing a radio wave transmitting system for the purpose of rendering an area substantially free of termites, comprising at least two termite attractants, a first termite attractant comprising a radio wave transmitter capable of transmitting waves of a frequency and intensity to attract termites and at least one additional termite attractant comprising a termite-degradable material;

positioning said radio wave transmitter and said at least one additional termite attractant within a first location, said first location being inhabitable by termites; and

emitting radio wave transmissions generated by said transmitter of said frequency and intensity that attracts termites from said transmitter, wherein said termites are attracted by said radio wave transmissions toward said first location and away from a second location.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said first location is an area where termite activity is desired.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said material is selected from the group consisting of a natural wooden object, a man-made wooden object, a termite-degradable object, a termite bait material, and a structure that includes a wooden component.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein said second location is within a radius of about 100 feet from said transmitter.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at a frequency of about 1 to about 100 megahertz.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at an intensity of 1 to 100 kilowatts.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at an intensity of 1 to 30 kilowatts.

15. The method of claim 8, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at a frequency of about 1 to about 30 megahertz.

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16. A method of protecting a selected area from termite activity comprising:

providing a radio wave transmitting system for the purpose of rendering the selected area substantially free of termites, comprising at least two termite attractants, a first termite attractant comprising a radio wave transmitter capable of transmitting waves of a frequency and intensity to attract termites and at least one additional termite attractant comprising a termite-degradable material;

positioning said radio wave transmitter and said at least one additional termite attractant within a first location, said first location being inhabitable by termites and adjacent to a second location comprising said selected area which is vulnerable to termite activity; and

emitting radio wave transmissions generated by said transmitter of said frequency and intensity that attracts termites from said transmitter, wherein said termites are attracted toward said first location and away from said second location, thereby protecting said selected area from termite activity.

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17. The method of claim **16**, wherein said selected area is located at least about 100 feet from said transmitter.

18. The method of claim **17**, wherein said second location is within a radius of about 100 feet from said transmitter.

19. The method of claim **16**, wherein said material is selected from the group consisting of a natural wooden object, a man-made wooden object, a termite-degradable object, a termite bait material, and a structure that includes a wooden component.

20. The method of claim **16**, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at a frequency of about 1 to about 100 megahertz.

21. The method of claim **20**, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at an intensity of 1 to 100 kilowatts.

22. The method of claim **16**, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at a frequency of about 1 to about 30 megahertz.

23. The method of claim **22**, wherein said radio waves are transmitted at an intensity of 1 to 30 kilowatts.

* * * * *



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(12) **United States Patent**
Ragon et al.

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(54) **TERMITE CONTROL METHODS AND APPARATUS**

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A01M 1/02 (2006.01)

A01M 1/20 (2006.01)

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See application file for complete search history.

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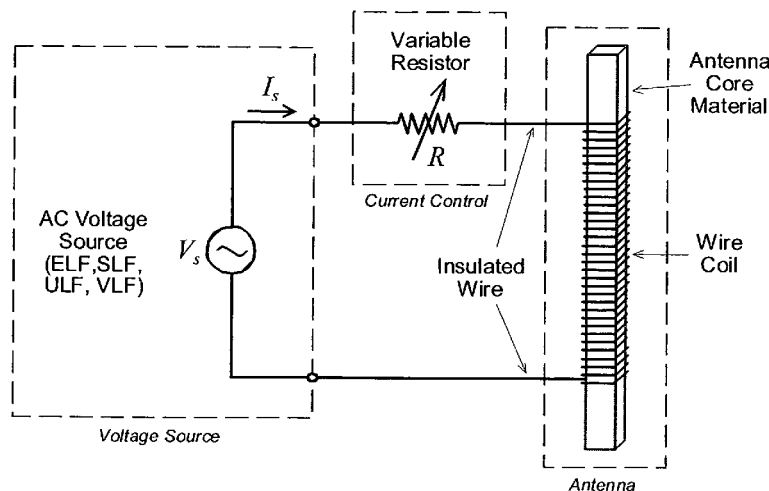
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides methods and apparatus for controlling insect population or activity by using electromagnetic field source of certain frequency and intensity coupled with insect food sources/attractants. The present invention can be used to protect a natural or man-made structure from termite infestation. The present invention can also be used for controlling activity of other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

11 Claims, 26 Drawing Sheets



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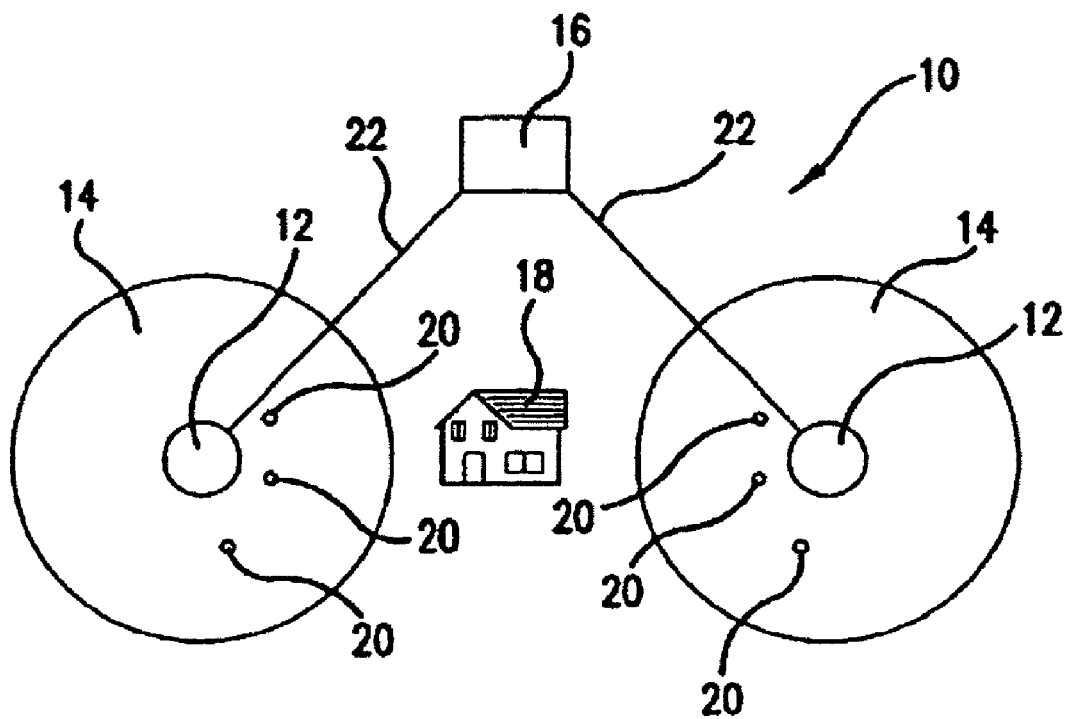


FIG. 1A

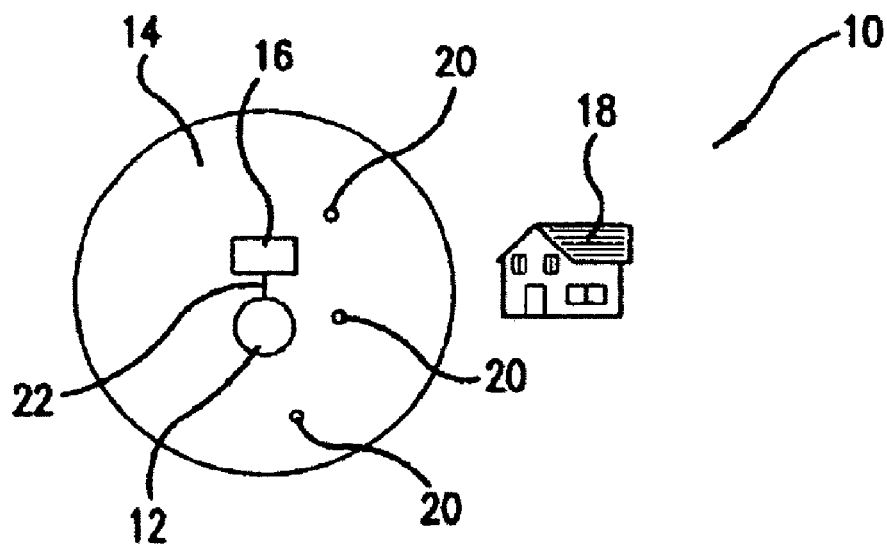


FIG. 1B

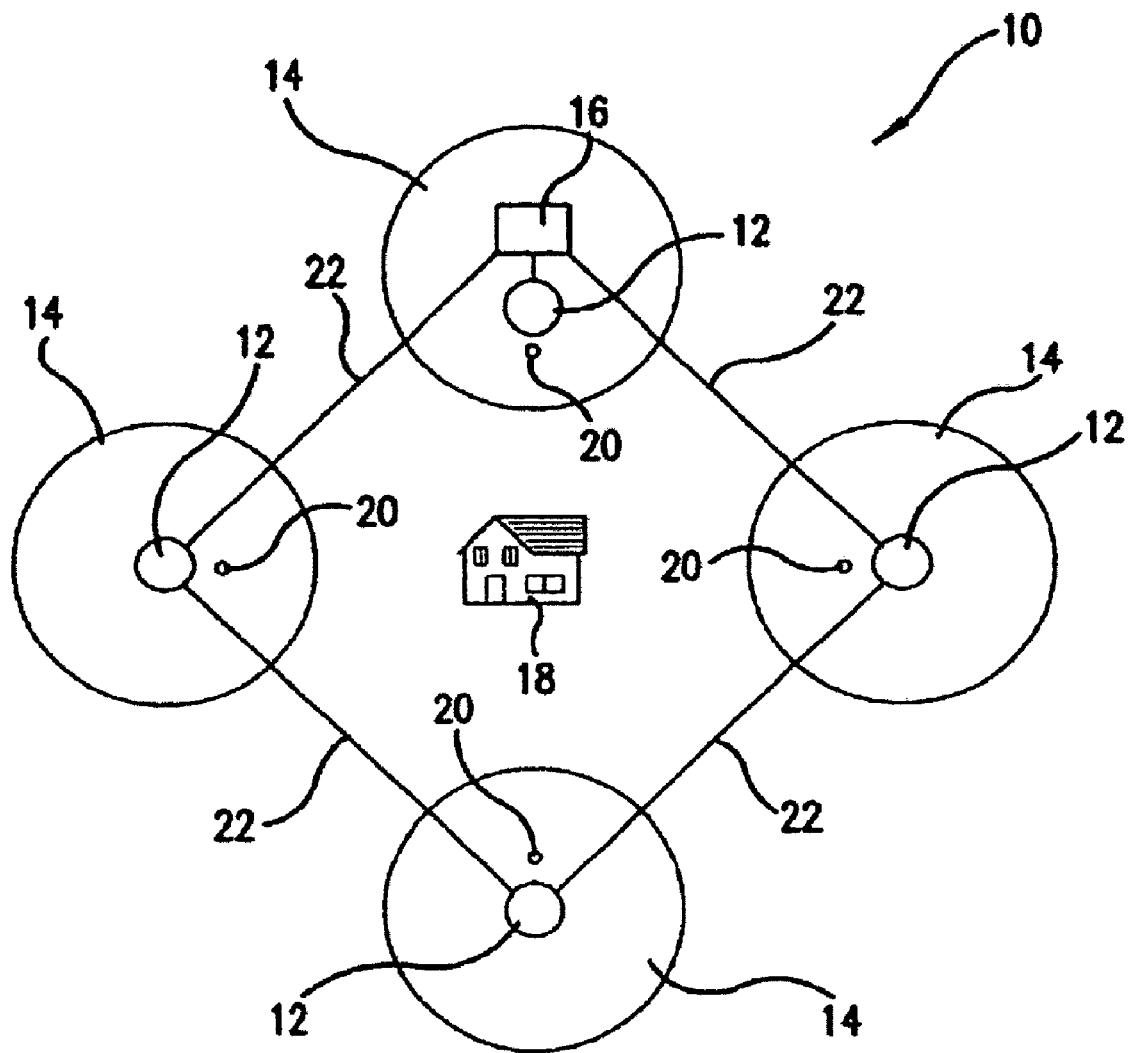


FIG.1C

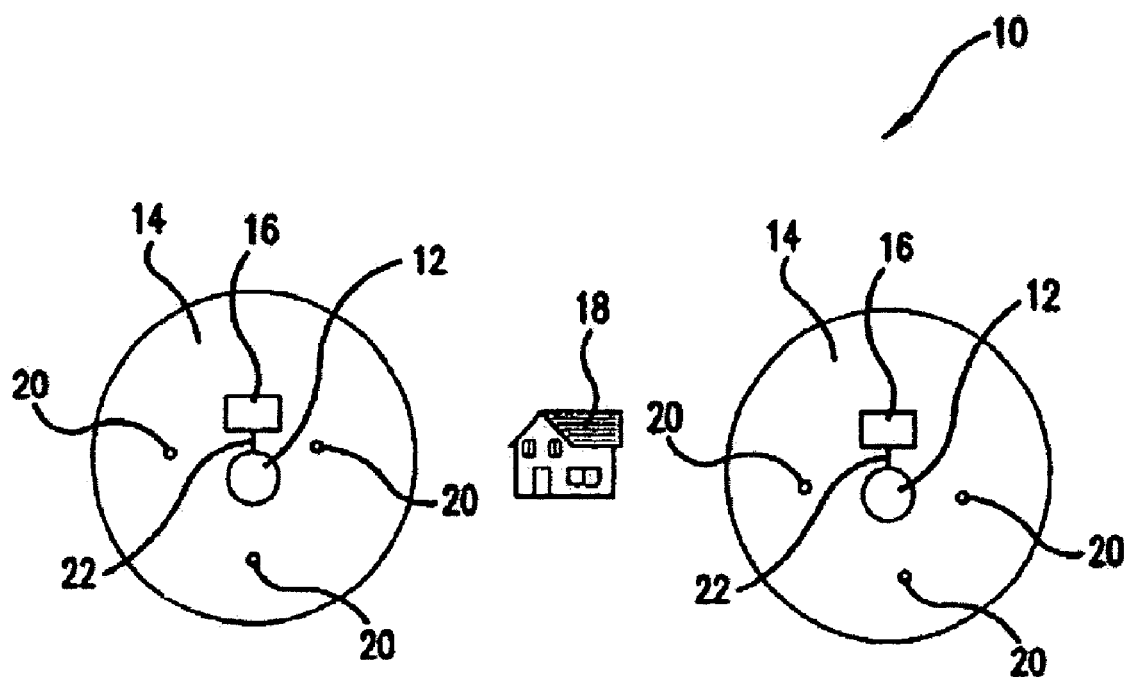


FIG. 1D

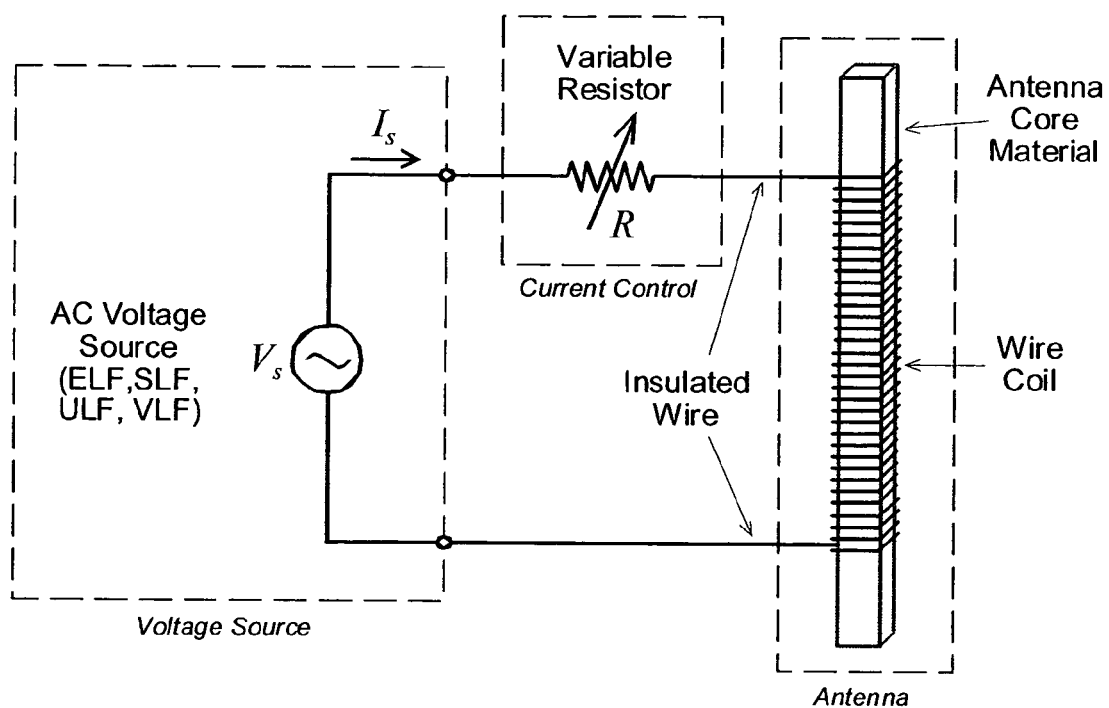


Figure 2

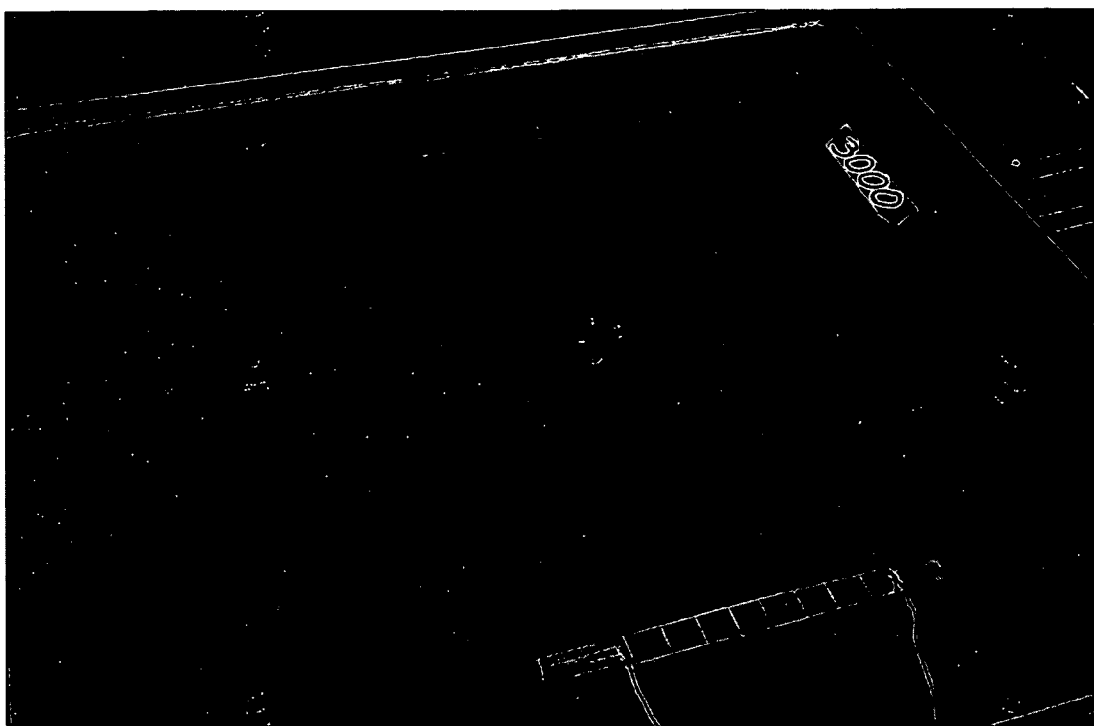


Figure 3

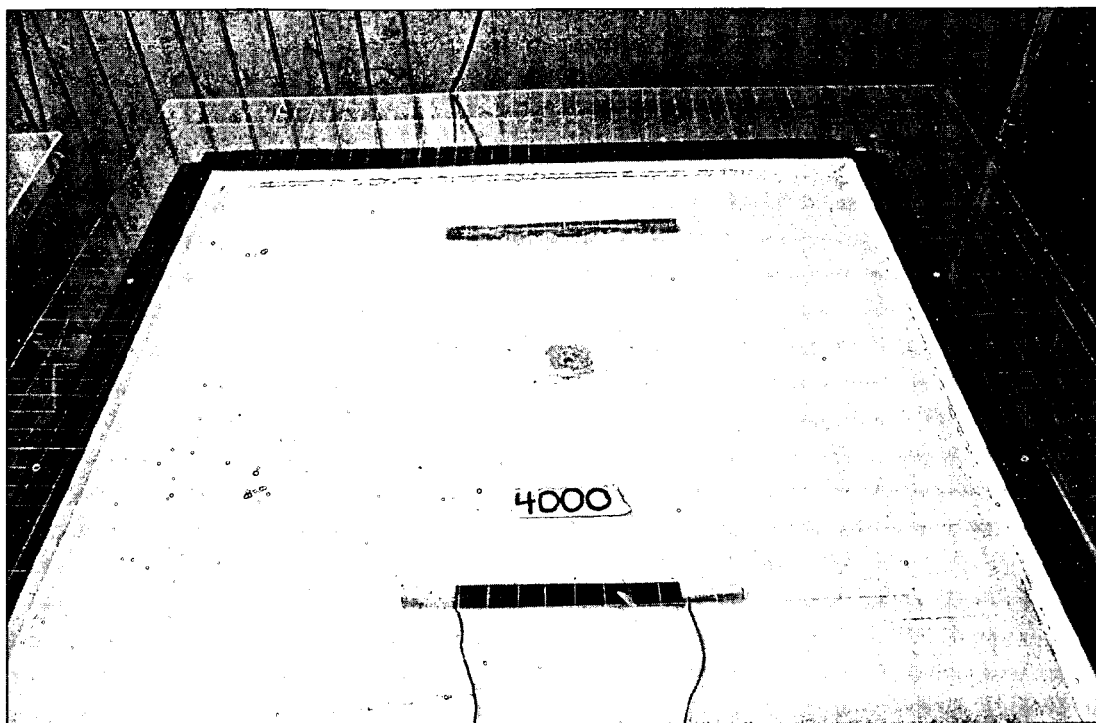


Figure 4

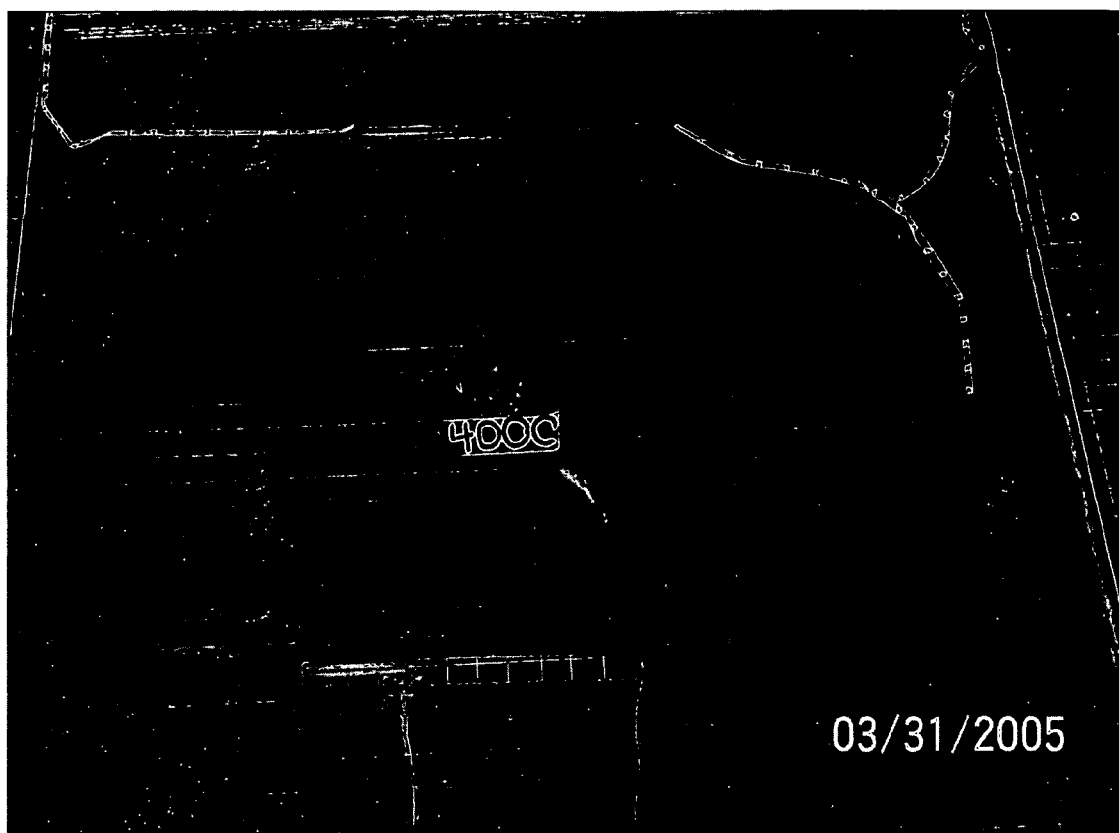


Figure 5

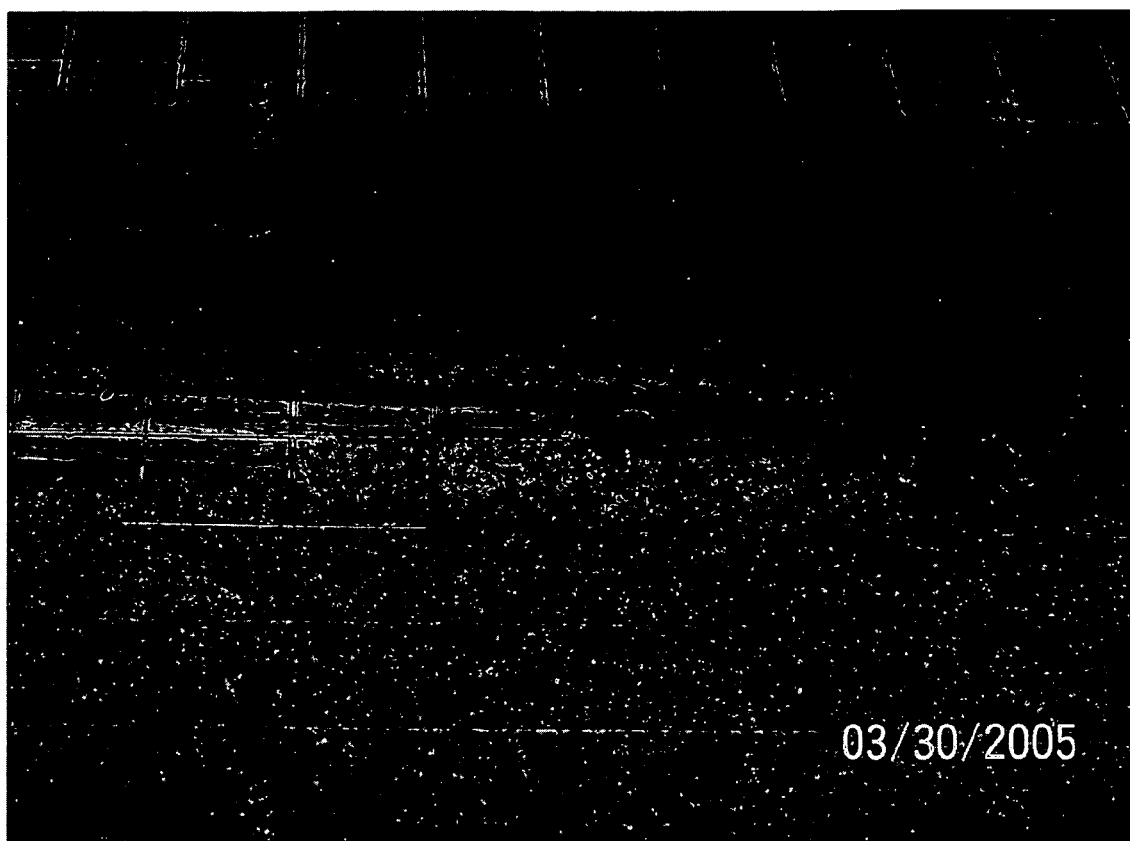


Figure 6

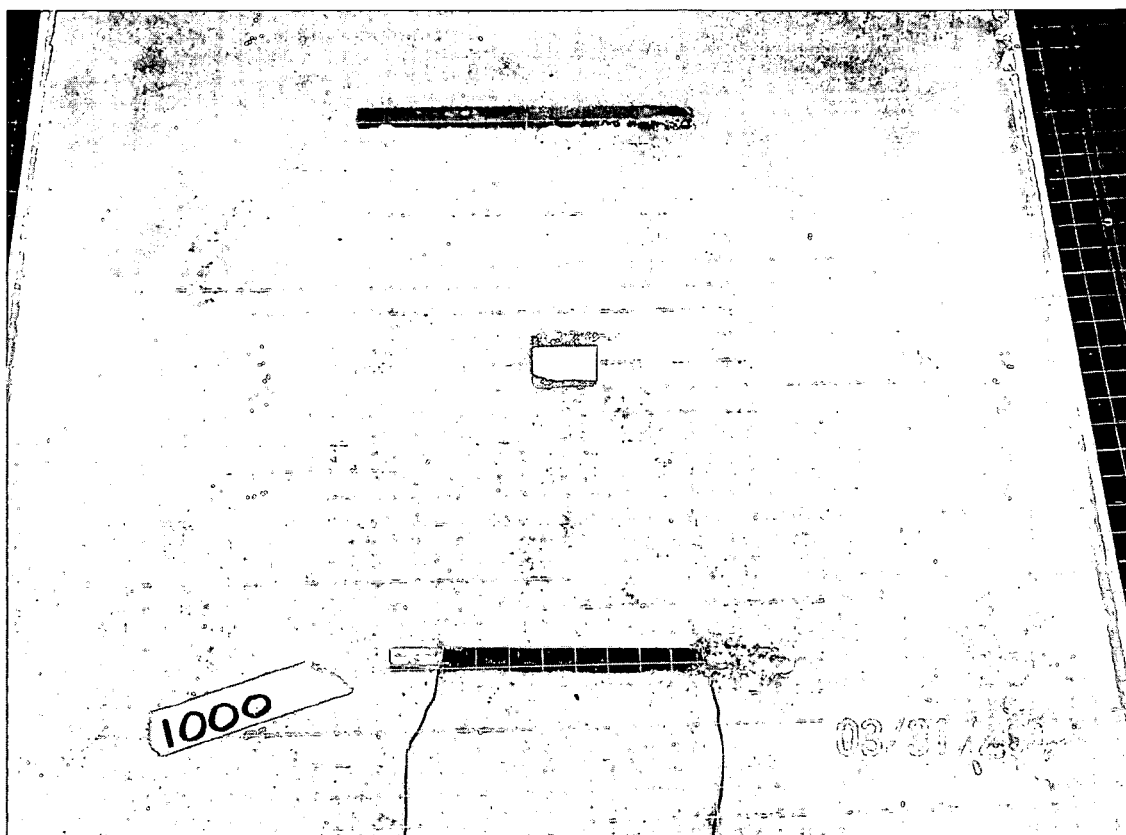


Figure 7

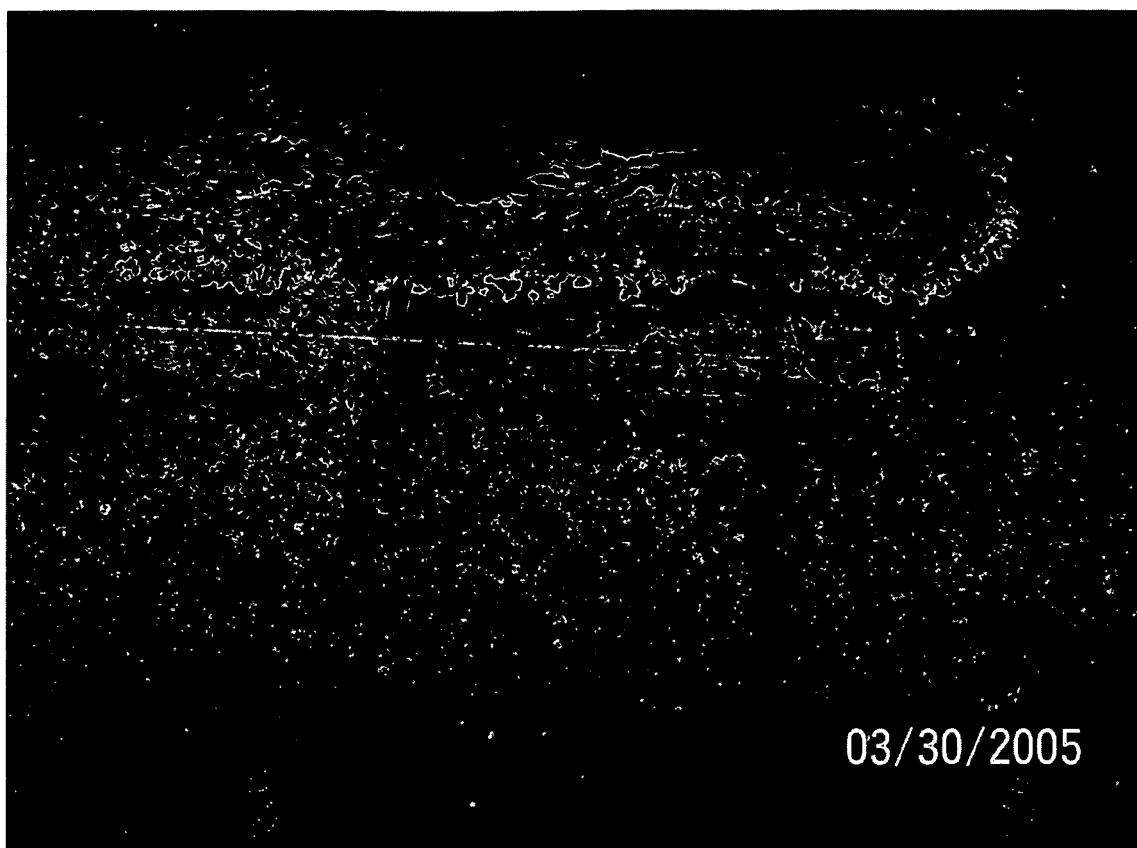


Figure 8

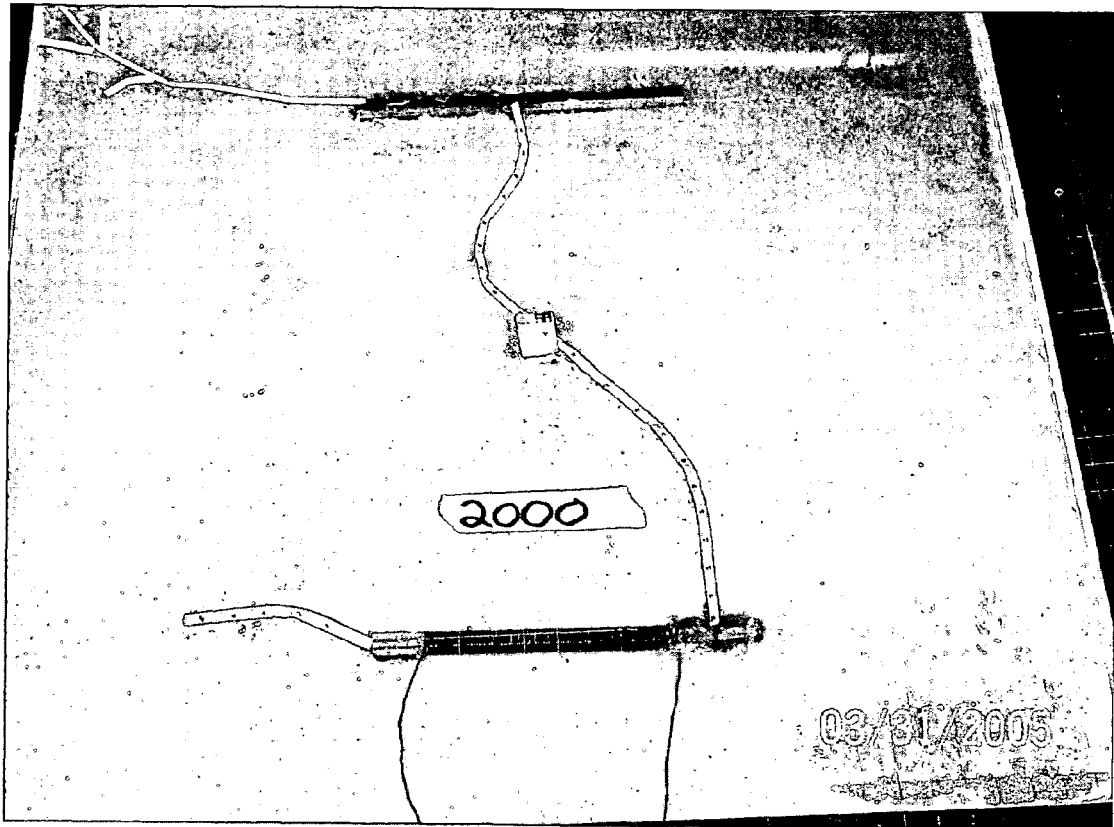


Figure 9



Figure 10

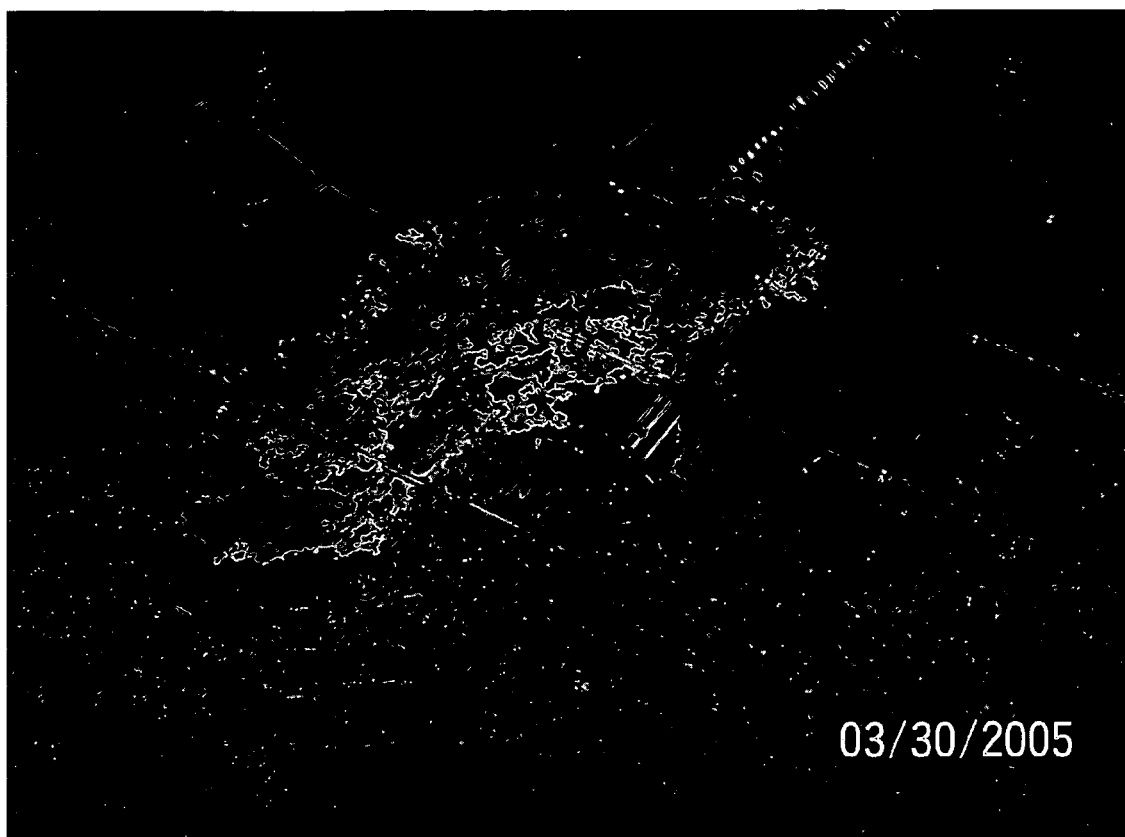


Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

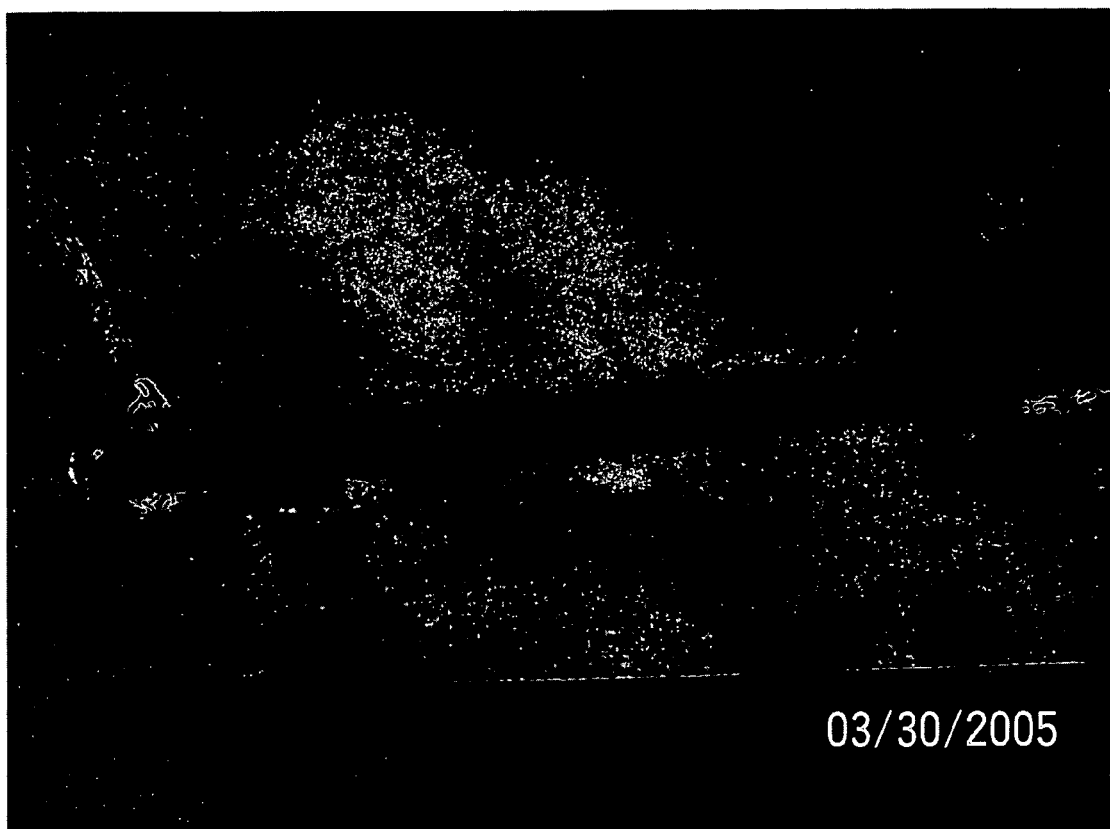


Figure 15

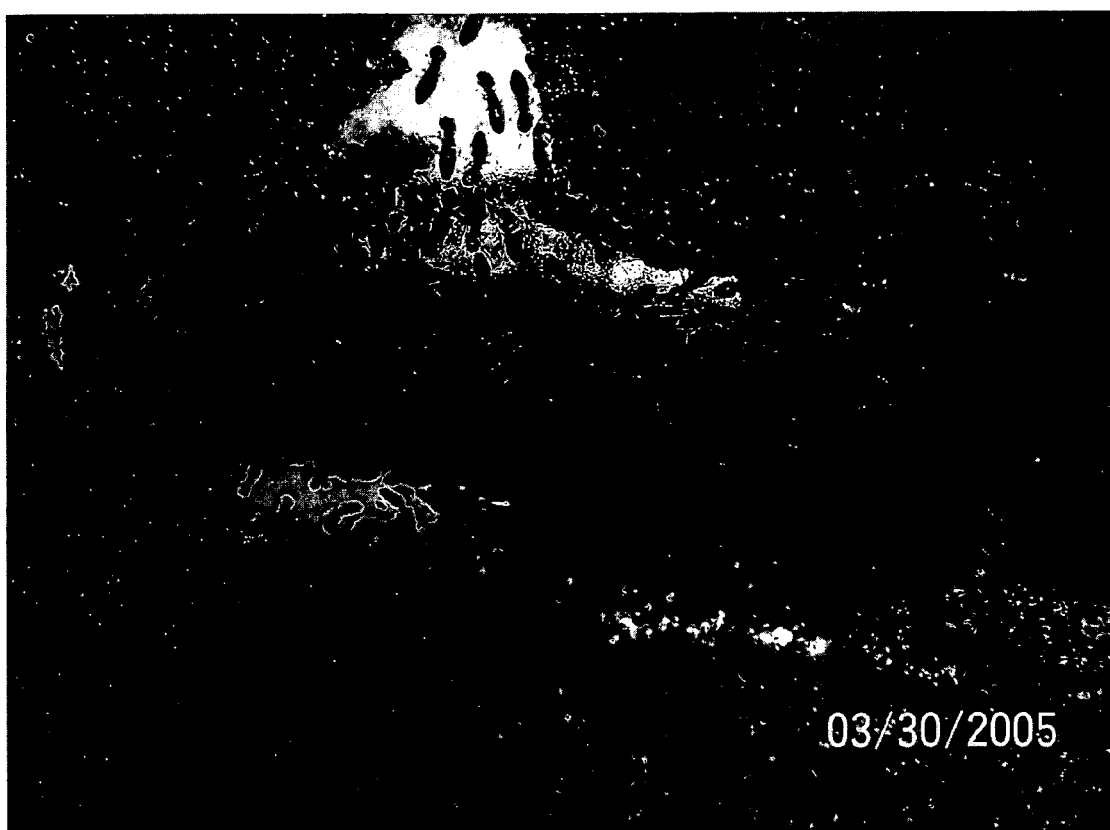


Figure 16

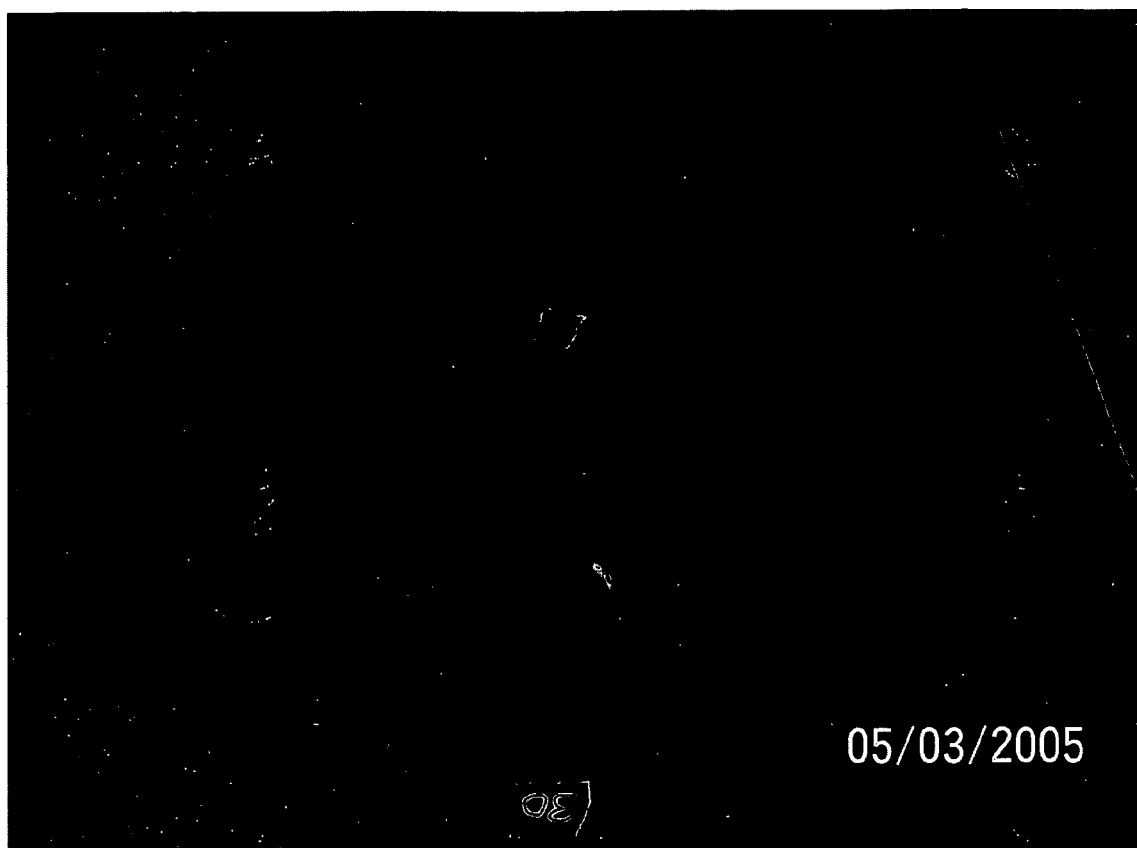


Figure 17



Figure 18A

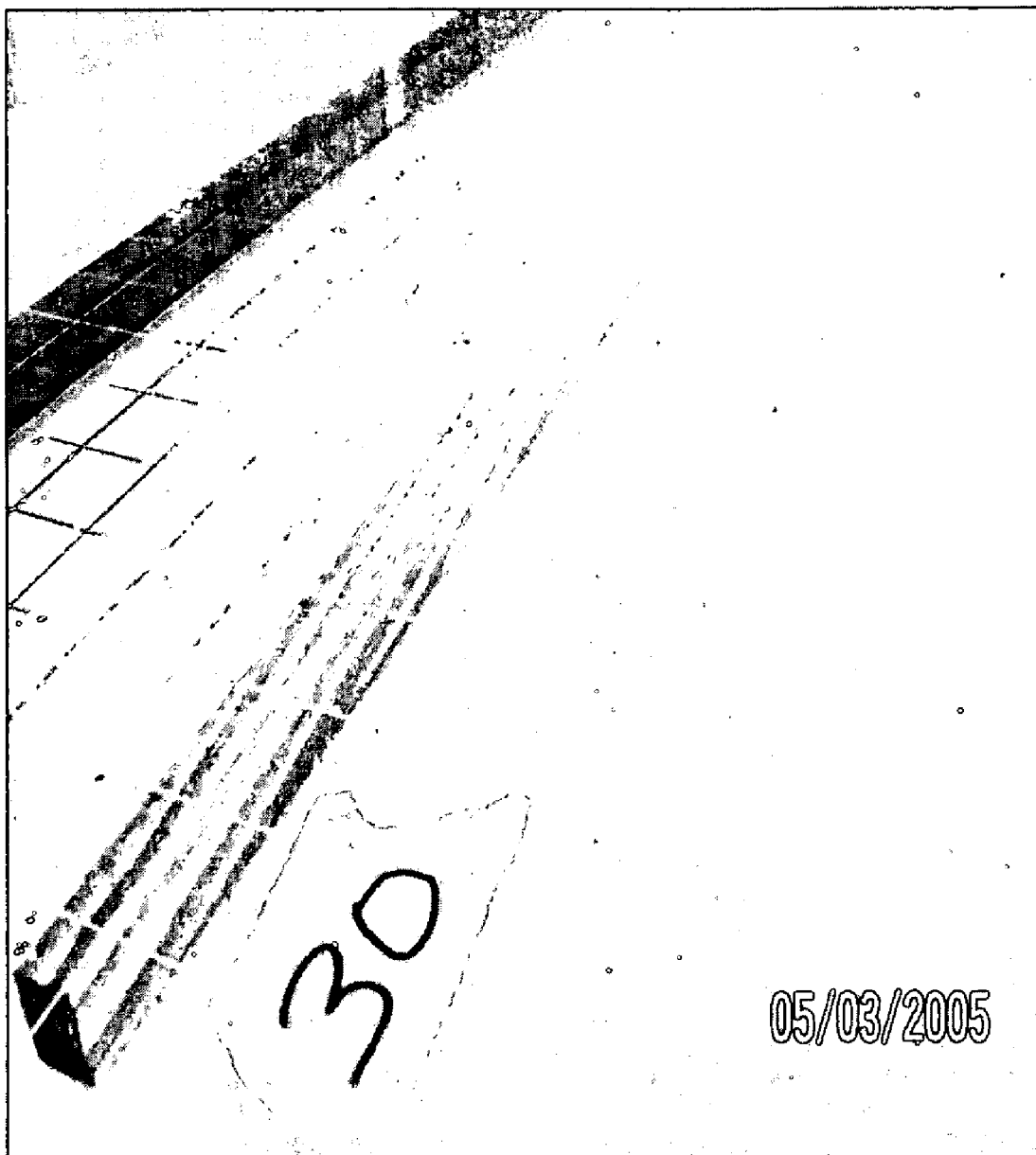


Figure 18B

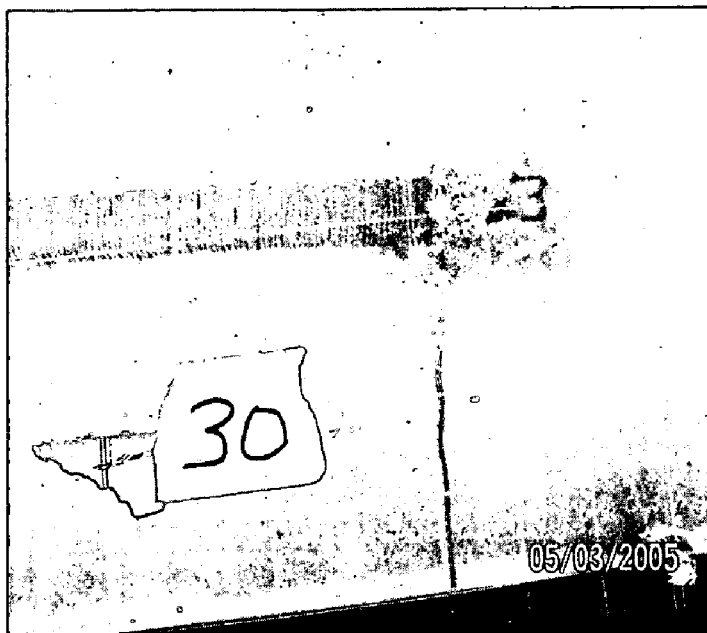


Figure 19A

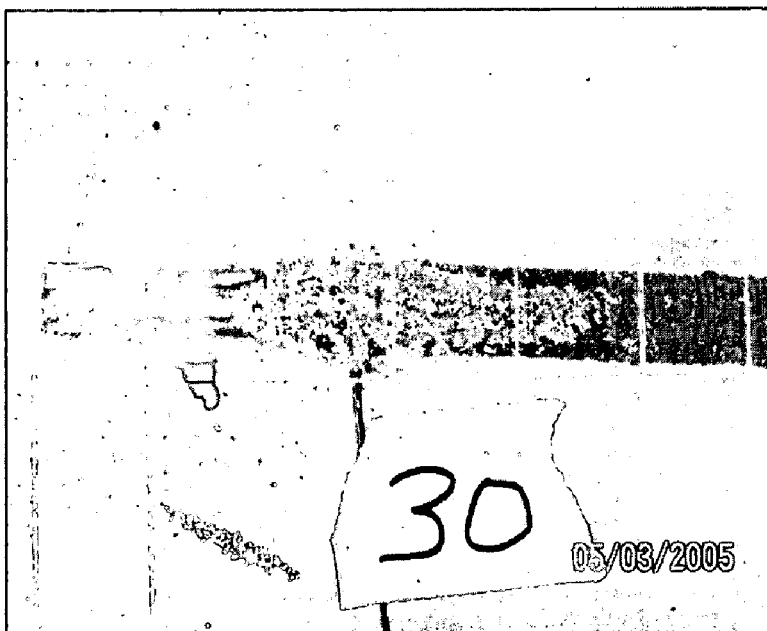


Figure 19B

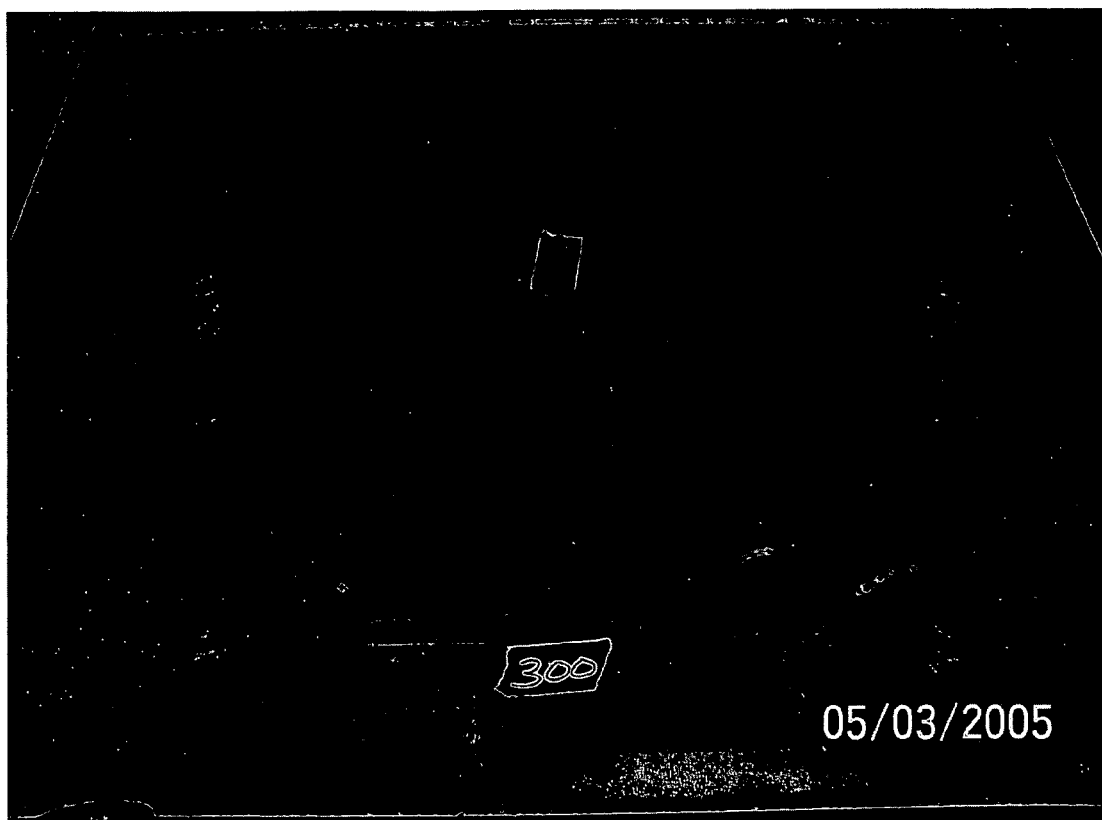


Figure 20

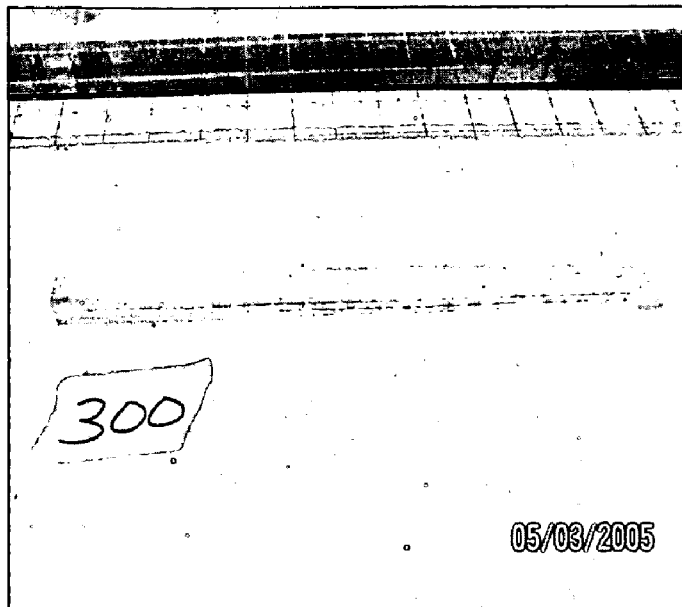


Figure 21A

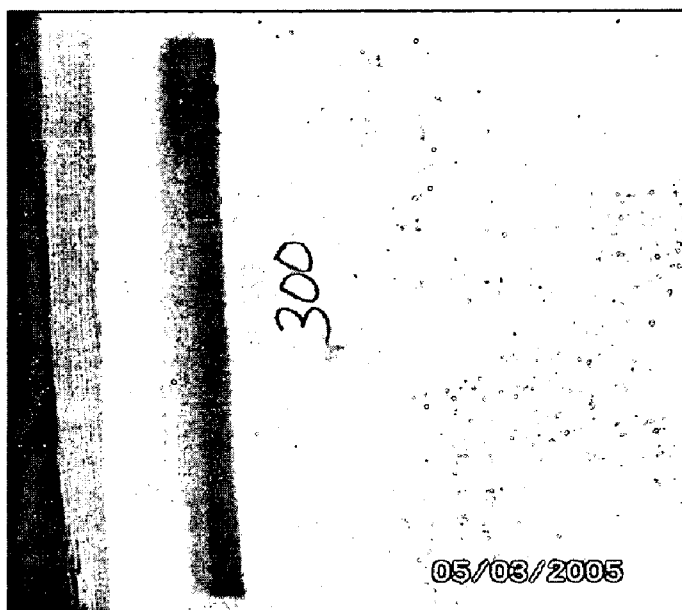


Figure 21B



Figure 22A



Figure 22B

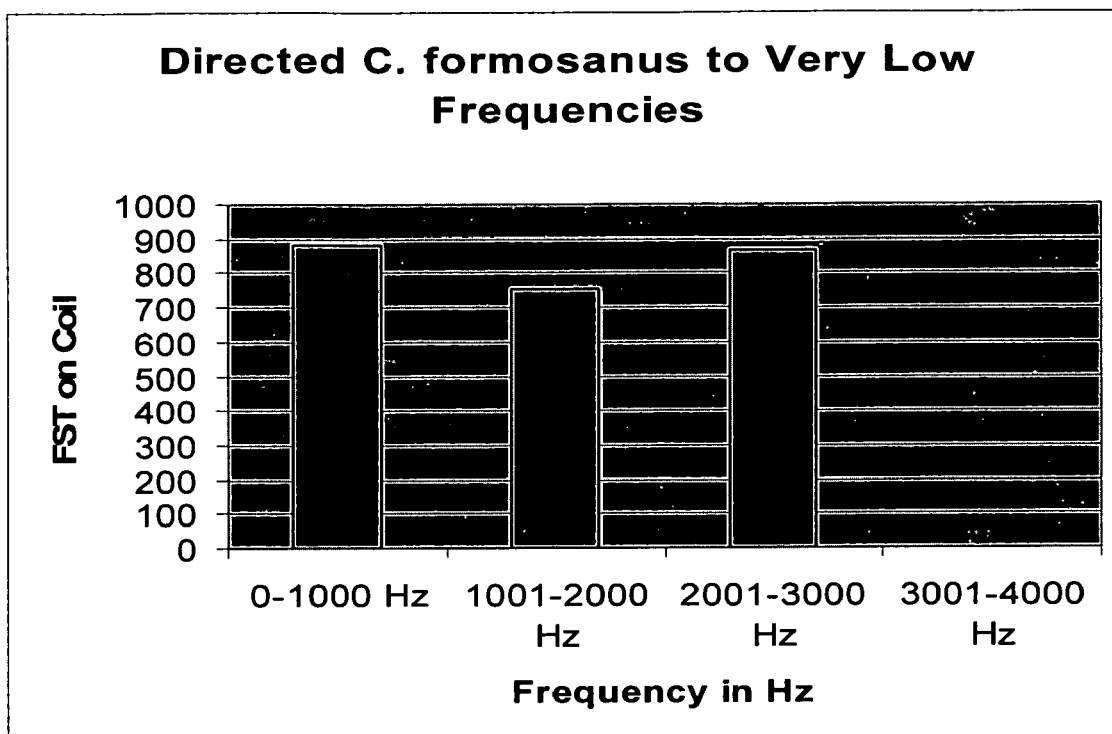


Figure 23

TERMITE CONTROL METHODS AND APPARATUS

This invention was made with Government support under U.S. Department of Agriculture/Forest Service Grant Number 04-JV-1111136-104. The Government may have certain rights in this invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to the field of insect control technology, and more specifically, to methods and apparatus for controlling termite activity, movement and population using radio waves (e.g. electromagnetic fields) within a certain frequency range. The methods and apparatus may be used to protect a structure from termite infestation.

2. Background of the Technology

Untreated termite infestations lead to irreversible structural damage in buildings throughout the world. As a result, a myriad of treatments to control or destroy termite populations have been developed. Because of the potential negative environmental impact of insecticides, environmentally friendly alternatives have been the primary focus of the latest research.

A significant amount of prior art focuses on the use of electromagnetic fields to control (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,473,836, issued to Liu discloses a method for removing insects from "hidden places" by inducing an electromagnetic field to create physical vibrations. U.S. Pat. No. 5,930,946 issued to Mah discloses a method for creating an electromagnetic field to which pests react adversely. U.S. Pat. No. 5,442,876 issued to Pederson discloses a method for controlling termites by heating the area where termites are located to temperatures which are lethal to living organisms by means of electromagnetic energy. U.S. Pat. No. 4,870,779 issued to Bergerioux et al. discloses a method in which a low frequency, randomly varying magnetic field is generated by a device such that it interacts with the earth's geomagnetic field to eliminate (repel) rodents and similar pests located above and below ground level in the area surrounding the device.

The use of electrical energy has also been employed in efforts to eliminate (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,210,719 issued to Lawrence discloses an apparatus and method which uses a sweep-frequency, high voltage generator coupled to an applicator gun for feeding electric power into pest-infested dielectrics, for example termite-infested wood. U.S. Pat. No. 4,366,644 issued to Lawrence discloses a method that involves the application of broadband radio frequency or multifrequency high-voltage electrical energy to termite shelter tubes, galleries and nests and to the bodies of termites in those areas. The '644 patent describes methods to kill termites directly by electroshock or indirectly by creating interference with the digestive processes of termites. U.S. Pat. No. 4,782,623 issued to Lawrence discloses an apparatus and method, which uses a phase-locked high voltage, high frequency pulse generator capable of "quasi-unlimited" power output and an applicator gun for feeding electric power into pest-infested dielectrics, for example termite infested wood. U.S. Pat. No. 4,223,468 issued to Lawrence discloses a method that involves killing termites by the application of broadband, high voltage electrical energy to habitats of termites.

The application of microwave energy has also been employed in the attempt to control (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,575,106 issued to Martin et al. discloses a method of using low voltage "microwave

horns" to kill termite populations. U.S. Pat. No. 5,896,696 issued to Stokes et al. discloses an apparatus and method for generating and radiating energy at specific wavelengths for the purpose of adversely affecting the nervous systems of "small insects."

While these environmentally friendly methods of controlling termites have avoided the use of conventional pesticides, they have failed to adequately protect termite-susceptible structures from infestation. U.S. Pat. No. 6,837,001 to Amburgey et al. describes a method to attract termites to a selected area using radio waves and thereby provide protection from termites for other adjacent areas. The frequency of the radio waves ranged from about 1-100 megahertz with intensities 1-100 K watts.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

One aspect of the present invention relates to a method for controlling termite movement or population by (1) positioning an electromagnetic field source at a frequency of less than 4000 Hz with an intensity of 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt as a termite attractant in the proximity of a target location that is inhabitable by termites and (2) producing electromagnetic fields to attract termites towards the frequency field source and away from the undesired location. The method is also applicable to other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

In a preferred embodiment, the termite attractant comprises a termite-degradable material such as wood. In another preferred embodiment, the termite attractant comprises a toxic bait, a light trap, or a termite trap that is capable of eliminating the attracted termites.

Another aspect of the invention relates to a system for controlling termite activity or population, comprising an electromagnetic field source at a frequency of less than 4000 Hz with an intensity of 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt; and a termite attractant comprising a termite degradable material. The system can also be used to control activity of other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

In a preferred embodiment, the electromagnetic field source comprises a voltage portion and an antenna portion, wherein said antenna portion is mountable on or adjacent to the termite attractant.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIGS. 1A-1D show diagram representations of different embodiments of the electromagnetic field generating system of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic showing a device capable of generating electromagnetic fields with extremely low frequencies (ELF), super low frequencies (SLF), ultra low frequencies (ULF) or very low frequencies (VLF).

FIGS. 3 shows termites at an introduction point of a test chamber.

FIG. 4 shows that there are no termites on a source producing electromagnetic fields at 4000 Hz with an intensity of 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt indicating repellency, directing 100% FST to the control in replicated 14-day studies.

FIG. 5 shows VLF 4000 Hz test chamber, there is no FST foraging within 11.5" (29.21 cm) of the #1 source producing electromagnetic fields at 4000 Hz.

FIG. 6 shows a VLF 4000 Hz test chamber, 100% FST are on the control and no FST are on the source producing electromagnetic fields at 4000 Hz.

FIG. 7 shows that, in an ultra-low frequency test chamber, 95% of FST are directed to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 1000 Hz and an average of 88% FST are

directed to the electromagnetic field source verses the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 8 is a closer view of the ULF source directing FST to a source producing electromagnetic fields at 1000 Hz.

FIG. 9 is an ULF 2000 Hz test chamber, in which 85% of the FST are directed to a source producing electromagnetic fields at 2000 Hz and an average of 78% FST are directed to the electromagnetic field source verses the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 10 shows, in an ULF 2000 Hz test chamber with a large shelter tube built from the center of the test chamber from the control to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 2000 Hz.

FIG. 11 is an up close view of FST on the source producing electromagnetic fields at 2000 Hz.

FIG. 12 shows, in a VLF 3000 Hz test chamber, foraging to a source producing electromagnetic fields at 3000 Hz from the control in a direct pattern which had 90% of FST directed to the source versus the control and averaged 87% after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 13 shows FST on/in the source producing electromagnetic fields at 3000 Hz.

FIG. 14 shows, in a VLF 3000 Hz test chamber, FST underneath the electromagnetic field source.

FIG. 15 shows, in a VLF 3000 Hz test chamber, the underside of the electromagnetic field source with FST tunneling to the electromagnetic field source.

FIG. 16 is a close up view of the underside of the VLF 3000 Hz test chamber.

FIG. 17 shows an ELF/SLF 30 Hz test chamber with 100% of FST directed to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 30 Hz and no termites on the control after the 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 18A is a bottom view of a control in an ELF/SLF 30 Hz test chamber showing no visible termites.

FIG. 18B is a top view of the control of FIG. 18A in an ELF/SLF 30 Hz test chamber showing no visible termites on the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 19A is a top view of the right side of ELF/SLF 30 Hz electromagnetic field source and FIG. 19B is a top view of the left side of /SLF 30 Hz electromagnetic field source. FIGS. 19A and 19B show termites consuming the wood, filling the coils with sand and chewed plastic from the wire coils in the shelter tubing in the right side photo.

FIG. 20 is a SLF/ULF 300 Hz test chamber showing 100% of the termites directed to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 300 Hz and no termites on the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIGS. 21A and 21B are the top view and bottom view, respectively, of a SLF/ULF 300 Hz test chamber non-energized control that showed no termite activity after 14-day replicated studies.

FIGS. 22A and 22B are the top view and bottom view, respectively, of a SLF/ULF 300 Hz electromagnetic field source that had 100% of the termite activity after the 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 23 is a bar graph summarizing the replicated results of the experiments described in FIGS. 3-22.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The following detailed description is presented to enable any person skilled in the art to make and use the invention. For purposes of explanation, specific details are set forth to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. However, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that these specific details are not required to practice the invention.

Descriptions of specific applications are provided only as representative examples. Various modifications to the preferred embodiments will be readily apparent to one skilled in the art, and the general principles defined herein may be applied to other embodiments and applications without departing from the scope of the invention. The present invention is not intended to be limited to the embodiments shown, but is to be accorded the widest possible scope consistent with the principles and features disclosed herein.

The present invention is based on the surprising discovery that termites are attracted by electromagnetic fields in a frequency of less than 4000 Hz. One aspect of the present invention, as described below and shown in the accompanying figures, relates to a method for controlling termites by attracting termites either into a termite control device or to an area away from an infested structure to an area using radio waves (e.g. electromagnetic fields) in the frequency range of 1-3999 Hz.

Electromagnetic fields in the frequency range of 1-4000 Hz can be generated by an oscillator and antenna and is well known to one skilled in the art [Constantine Balanis, "Antenna Theory, Analysis and Design, 3rd. Ed.", John Wiley and Sons, (2005); Warren Stutzmann, et al., "Antenna Theory and Design, 2nd. Ed.", John Wiley and Sons, (1998)]. Depending on the size of a protected area, the power output of the electromagnetic field source can vary from about 1 milliwatt to about 1 kilowatt. As shown in FIGS. 1A-1D, the electromagnetic field generation system, generally shown at 10, can be configured to position at least one electromagnetic source 12 in a transmission area 14. An electromagnetic field generation system 16 is designed to provide electromagnetic fields in the range of 1-3999 Hz within a transmission area 14. As shown in FIGS. 1A and 1C, the transmitter 16 can be operationally connected to more than one transmitting device 12.

The electromagnetic field transmitting system 10 can have varied configurations where the transmitting device 12 can be positioned adjacent to or circumferentially disposed around a natural or man-made termite-degradable structure 18 for which protection from termite damage is desired (FIGS. 1A-D). The structure 18 can have a degradable component and therefore be susceptible to termite damage. The different transmitting system configurations depicted in FIGS. 1A-1D are non-limiting examples, the pattern of which can be widely varied without departing from the concept of the present invention.

Within the effective range of the transmission area 14, natural or man-made termite-degradable materials can be positioned so as to provide a food source/attractant 20 for termites that is localized within the transmission area 14. Inclusion of the food source/attractant 20, in addition to increasing the effectiveness of the termite-attraction of the transmitting device 12, also provides foci for termite infestation in the transmission area 14. By focusing the relocation of the termites to the attractant 20, subsequent containment, collection, or elimination of the termites by conventional means can be facilitated. One skilled in the art would understand that the size of the transmission area 14 is determined by the design and output power of the electromagnetic field 12. The electromagnetic field 12 or antenna portions of the radio wave transmitters 12, as well as the attractant 20, should be placed in sufficient proximity of the termite degradable structure so as the food source/attractant directs the termites away from the termite degradable structure.

The termite food source/attractant 20 can be anything that attracts termites, including but not limited to, bait stations, termite traps, and light traps. A bait station is typically com-

prised of a non-biodegradable holder (e.g. plastic) that is placed in the substrate (soil) and holds a cellulose material (termite food/wood or pure cellulose monitoring stake). The bait stations are then placed near a structure (e.g., a house) in areas that are susceptible to termite attack. If termites inhabit the bait station the cellulose material can be removed and a cellulose/toxicant mixture (bait matrix) can be added to the bait station to eliminate the termite colony. Bait stations are commercially available from, for example, Dow Agro-Sciences. A termite trap is simply a container, such as a bucket with small openings or a milk crate, filled with wood and placed in the substrate near a termite infested site. A termite trap is similar to a bait station but is larger in size and is used to collect termites for laboratory trials. [see e.g., Tamashiro, et al., *Environmental Entomology* 2:721-722 (1973)]. Light traps are generally constructed using a light, a sticky pad (e.g., rodent pad with a strong adhesive for trapping small rodents) and a structure to mount the two close together to attract Formosan subterranean termite alates (winged termites). More information on the light trap can be found at (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/oct98/term1098.htm>).

In one embodiment, the food source/attractant **20** comprises natural or man-made termite-degradable materials that attract termites away from the structure **18** but do not kill the attracted termites. In another embodiment, the food source/attractant **20** comprises materials (such as toxic baits) and/or devices (such as termite traps) that are capable of killing the attracted termites.

The method is applicable to all termite species including, but not limited to, subterranean termites such as *Coptotermes* spp., *Reticulitermes* spp., and Drywood termites (*Cryptotermes*, *Kaloterms*, ect.). species. The method is also applicable to other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps. Unlike conventional remedial termite control methods, the present invention provides a method to control subterranean, surface, and dispersal flight movement of termites before or after infestation of an area in need of protection. The inclusion of attraction augmentation in the electromagnetic field transmitting system **10** of the present invention further permits the localization by directing movement of the termites within the transmission area.

The present invention can be used to attract termites to the transmission area **14** for containment, collection, study, or elimination. By properly positioning the transmitting system **10** relative to a natural or man-made structure **18** for which termite protection is desired, the termites can be attracted away from the material or structure **18** that is to be protected and drawn towards the transmitting system **10**. Non-limiting examples of transmitting system configurations which can be used to provide protection for a material or object, such as a house, fence, utility pole, or any material subject to termite infestation are shown in FIGS. 1A-D.

One skilled in the art will recognize that the electromagnetic fields transmitting system **10** can also be used within a termite degradable structure **18**, such as a house. In one embodiment, the electromagnetic field transmitting system **10** comprises one or more small electromagnetic field wave transmitters **12** and one or more food source/attractants **20** that are capable of killing the attracted termites. The electromagnetic field wave transmitters **12** and the food source/attractants **20** are placed near or around a termite infested area within the termite degradable structure **18**. The food source/attractants **20**, with the augmentation from the electromagnetic fields emitted from the electromagnetic field transmitters **12**, attract termites away from the infested area and eliminate the attracted termites. The method is described in more detail in U.S. Pat. No. 6,837,001 to Amburgey et al.,

which is herein incorporated by reference. In one embodiment, the electromagnetic field transmitters **12** are coil shaped antennas capable of generating ELF, SLF, ULF and VLF electromagnetic fields.

FIG. 2 shows an embodiment of a device for generating very-low to extra-low frequency radio waves in a restricted area. The device comprises three basic components: (1) a voltage source, (2) a current control circuit and (3) a coil. As shown in FIG. 2, the alternating current (AC) voltage source **Vs** produces a sinusoidal voltage at a single frequency within the ELF (3-30 Hz), SLF (30-300 Hz), ULF (300 Hz-3 kHz) or VLF (3-30 kHz) bands. The actual frequency used will depend on the function of the device to attract (3999 Hz-0.0009 Hz) or repel (4000 Hz-5 KHz) social insects such as termites. The amplitude of the sinusoidal voltage will depend on the designed range of the device for the desired application. The current control circuit consists of a variable resistor **R** that is used to control the source current **Is**. The source current passes through a coil that radiates the desired electromagnetic field at the frequency of the source. The coil geometry shown in FIG. 2 is a multiple-turn loop coil. The coil core material will depend on the application of the device to attract or repel a particular social insect. The multiple-turn loop coil was used in the examples described below. Other coil geometries may also be used.

The present invention is further illustrated by the following examples which should not be construed as limiting. The contents of all references, patents and published patent applications cited throughout this application, as well as the Figures and Tables, are incorporated herein by reference.

EXAMPLES

Termite Collection

Formosan subterranean Termites (*Coptotermes formosanus*, FST) and Eastern subterranean Termites (*Reticulitermes flavipes*, EST) were collected from and around the Mississippi State University (MSU) Formosan Termite Research Facility and the Stennis Space Center using methods described by Tamashiro et al. [Tamashiro, et al., *Environmental Entomology* 2:721-722, (1973)] and Kard et al. [Kard et al., *Sociobiology* 41:2:295-511, (2003)]. If stored, termites were held at the facility using methods described in the referenced articles.

Test Chamber

Two clear Plexiglas sheets 105 cm×105 cm sandwiched a sand media similar to Puche and Su, 2001 [*J. Econ Entomol.* 94:1398-1404, (2001)]. The Plexiglas was separated on four sides by acrylic spacers 2.54 cm×2.54 cm×105 cm. A piece of weathered southern yellow pine sapwood (SYP, *Pinus* spp.) 1.27 cm×1.27 cm×20 cm was used as a control 30 cm from the center termite release point and a source producing electromagnetic fields (very low frequencies, VLF) was attached to a SYP specimen similar to the control and was installed on the opposing side of the termite release point at the same distance. Both pieces of wood were aged by being cribbed-stacked outside for 6 months prior to the use in tests. The Plexiglas, inside of the spacers, was filled with 1866 g (1200 ml) of pool-sand that was sifted and moistened with a spray of 400 ml of de-ionized water.

Test Method

One thousand termites of either species (FST and EST) were used in each center release test chamber (one termite species per test unit). Each species was used in ratios as they are found in nature. A 20% soldier to worker ratio for FST and

a 1% soldier to worker ratio for EST was used. Termites were counted at the end of 14 days to determine which food choice was desired.

In this example, electromagnetic fields of the appropriate frequency were generated using a function generator producing an AC current. The coil was a SYP stake with 18 gauge wire coiled around it in 100 loops. The desired intensity in the first test was 0.720 mA with various test frequencies and doubled for the second set of replicates. Multiple frequencies were tested at one time (one per Plexiglas test unit), and replicated in time. These frequencies are listed in Tables 1 and 2.

Testing Results

Recorded results from directing movement of *C. formosanus* using radio waves (e.g. electromagnetic fields) at VLF (3-30 kHz) and ULF (300-3000 Hz) frequencies at Mississippi State University (MSU) Formosan Termite Research Facility in McNeill, Miss. (January-March 2005) are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Mortality for test date Feb. 02, 2005 was high because the termites escaped before 14 days except in the chamber that held the 3000 Hz coil. Therefore, numbers for replicate test one are based on 7 day recordings. Mortality was 10% for replicate date Mar. 03, 2005 and 5% for replicate date Mar. 16, 2005. Ultra-low frequency (ULF) 1000 Hz had a higher percentage of FST on the coil than any other tested frequency tested in the series of: ULF 2000 Hz, VLF 3000 Hz and 4000 Hz. VLF 4000 Hz never had termites on the coil at the end of the elapsed time of the 14-day test periods. ULF 2000 Hz and VLF 3000 Hz had a higher percentage of FST termites on these VLF and ULF coils than the controls.

Test results for test period Apr. 15, 2005 using SLF and ELF are impressive and are shown in Table 3. Two of the frequencies tested had complete, greater than ULF 1000 Hz, control directing the behavior of FST. SLF of 300 Hz and ELF of 30 Hz had 100% of the termites on the coil after the allotted 14-day time period. Low frequency 30 kHz showed little control over the behavior of the FST, having only one half of the FST (50%) on the coil.

Soldier to worker ratio 20%:80% was attempted with FST throughout the replicates. Cold weather throughout the months of January and February limited available termites. Weather below 40° F. caused the *C. formosanus* to migrate into the ground, and at this temperature termites were occasionally found in the centers of buried, fallen timber. On the mornings of February 17, March 2, and March 16, temperatures were at or below 40° F. which made termites sparse. Therefore, termites that were available were used and noted in tests. The limited amounts of termites made it difficult to obtain the desired number of soldiers, but 800 workers were constant in every experiment. Once termites were placed in the chamber, keeping the chambers sealed with one main respiration vent and a constant room temperature at 85° F. was the best situation for limiting termite mortality, keeping them comfortable throughout the test. Once poured inside the containers, the termites initially dispersed in every direction.

As shown in FIG. 3, the termites found the control wood easily and it appeared that they were eventually "pushed" in large numbers to the control within the first few hours and away from the VLF 4000 Hz source. There were a few termites on the coil initially when the FST were introduced into the test chamber. After a couple of hours, the few termites left the coil and no FST ever returned to the unit for 14-day test period (FIG. 4). In one replicate, the termites tunneled around the perimeter of the chamber (this did not occur in all tests) and never got within 11.5 inches (29.21 cm) of the test unit for test period Mar. 16, 2005 and did not occupy the shelter tubes at the end of 14-day elapsed time period of the test (FIG. 5). In three replicates, the coil operating at VLF 4000 Hz never had termites (0% of FST) and the control was completely colonized in every replicate (FIG. 6).

Upon introduction into the ULF 1000 Hz test chamber, FST acted very similar as termites had in other test frequency ranges, but slightly more termites accumulated on the coil. After a couple of hours the termites were directed to the coil. At the end of 14-day test period in replicated studies, almost every living termite was on, under or inside the coil (88.8% of FST) as seen in FIGS. (7-8). There was an average of 137 FST on the control wood at the end of the 14-day elapsed test period in the replicated tests seen in FIGS. 7 and 8.

Upon introduction into the ULF 2000 Hz test chamber, the termites initially reacted similar to VLF 1000 Hz except termites would find the control, colonize it and then tunnel back to the middle of the box where they had been introduced. FST would then tunnel to the experimental unit (ULF source). There were more FST on, under, and in the experimental unit (86.6%) than the control after 14-day replicated studies shown in FIGS. 9-11.

The introduction of FST into the VLF 3000 Hz test chambers produced results unlike any of the other experiments. Once introduced, every FST foraged to the control for almost twenty-four hours. After a day had passed the termites began to forage from the control wood to the VLF coil. On the 14th day of the study, more FST were on, under and in the experimental unit (89.6%) than the control unit in replicated tests shown in FIGS. 12-16.

Based on these results, further tests were performed using SLF at 30 Hz and ELF at 300 Hz. The SLF 30 Hz coil had every living FST in the test chamber on the SLF coil (100% FST on the coil, FIGS. 17-19). ELF 300 Hz coil also directed every living FST to the coil, altering their behavior (100% FST on the coil, FIGS. 20-22). These frequencies as well as the VLF frequencies would be similar to the ones used for tactical submarine communications that have been shown to direct FST behavior.

FIG. 23 summarizes the results from the above-described experiments. Similar results were also obtained with *Reticulitermes flavipes*. As shown in FIG. 23, radio waves (e.g. electromagnetic fields) in the frequency range of 1-3000 Hz are very effective in attracting termites and it is believed that radio waves (e.g. electromagnetic fields) in this frequency range will attract other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

TABLE 1

Results from Replicates.		
Frequency (Hz)	Termites/Comments	Date
4000	Colony in McNeill Down Log	(Feb. 2, 2005)-(Feb. 15, 2005)
	800 Workers = 3.31 g	Termites escaped but escaped away
	181 Soldiers = 0.66 g	from the test coil. 100% Mortality.
	(18.4% out of 981)	

TABLE 1-continued

<u>Results from Replicates.</u>		
Frequency (Hz)	Termites/Comments	Date
3000	800 Workers = 2.95 g 200 Soldiers = 1.01 g (20% out of 1,000)	Termites escaped but about 850 @ 7-days & 600 @ 14 days were on the coil. 30% Mortality.
2000	800 Workers = 3.18 g 200 Soldiers = 0.57 g (20% out of 1,000)	Termites grazed on coil (700-7 days) but left; after 14 days escaped on the coil side. 100% Mortality.
1000	800 Workers = 3.12 g 200 Soldiers = 0.92 g (20% out of 1,000)	Termites grazed on coil (750-7 days) but left after 14 days; escaped on coil side. 100% Mortality
4000	Colony McNeill Live Tree 800 Workers 075 Soldiers (8.6% out of 875)	(Mar. 3, 2005)-(Mar. 15, 2005) Termites (787) were all on the control wood away from the coil. Mortality was 10%
3000	800 Workers = 2.95 g 170 Soldiers = 1.01 g (17.5% out of 970)	Termites (742) were on the coil, Mortality was 10%. Control = 131
2000	800 Workers = 3.18 g 110 Soldiers = 0.57 g (11.3% out of 910)	Termites (541) were on the coil, Mortality was 15%. Control = 107
1000	800 Workers = 3.12 g 082 Soldiers = 0.92 g (9.3% out of 882)	Termites (754) were on the coil, Mortality was 10%. Control = 128
4000	Colony Derby Train Depo 800 Workers = 3.31 g 100 Soldiers = 0.66 g (11.1% out of 900)	(Mar. 16, 2005)-(Mar. 30, 2005) No termites were on the coil (855), about 5% mortality.
3000	800 Workers = 2.95 g 100 Soldiers = 1.01 g (11.1% out of 900)	Termites on coil (753) with the rest back and forth between middle and control, Mortality 7%. Control = 84
2000	800 Workers = 3.18 g 100 Soldiers = 0.57 g (11.1% out of 900)	Termites on coil (726), Mortality 5%. Control = 129
1000	800 Workers = 3.12 g 100 Soldiers = 0.92 g (11.1% out of 900)	Termites almost all in coil (787), Mortality 8%. Control = 41

TABLE 2

<u>Summary of Table 1 results.</u>		
Frequency (Hz)	Results (FST attracted to coil)	Date
4000	0	(Feb. 2, 2005)-(Feb. 15, 2005)
3000	85%	
2000	70%	
1000	75%	
4000	0	(Mar. 3, 2005)-(Mar. 15, 2005)
3000	85%	
2000	70%	
1000	95%	
4000	0	(Mar. 16, 2005)-(Mar. 30, 2005)
3000	90%	
2000	85%	
1000	95%	
Mean Results		February-March
4000	0	
3000	86.6%	
2000	78.3%	
1000	88.8%	

TABLE 3

<u>Test results for period starting Apr. 15, 2005.</u>			
Frequency (Hz)	Results (FST attracted to coil)	Date	
45	30,000 50%	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)	
	3000	Top of the test chamber lost its seal and dried out near the coil. About 100 termites remained in the coil despite the low moisture and the rest moved to the control where the moisture was. The power had also been lost for two days during the test.	
50			
	300 100%	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)	
55	30 100%	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)	

The above description is for the purpose of teaching the person of ordinary skill in the art how to practice the present invention, and it is not intended to detail all those obvious modifications and variations of which it will become apparent to the skilled worker upon reading the description. It is intended, however, that all such obvious modifications and variations be included within the scope of the present invention, which is defined by the following claims. The claims are intended to cover the claimed components and steps in any

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sequence which is effective to meet the objectives there intended, unless the context specifically indicates the contrary.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of directing termite movement toward an antenna portion of an electromagnetic field source and a termite food source/attractant in proximity to a target location, said target location being inhabitable by termites, the method comprising the step of:

emitting an electromagnetic field from said antenna portion of said electromagnetic field source at a frequency of less than 4000 Hz that attracts termites to said antenna portion, wherein the termites are attracted by said electromagnetic field away from said target location and toward said electromagnetic field source and termite food/attractant, wherein said termite food source/attractant comprises a termite bait, and wherein said termite bait is a toxic bait.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said termite food source/attractant comprises a material selected from the group consisting of a natural wooden object, a man-made wooden object, a termite-degradable object, a termite bait material, and a structure that includes a wooden or cellulose-containing component.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at a frequency of about 1 Hz to about 3000 Hz.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at a frequency of about 1 Hz to about 1000 Hz.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at a frequency of about 300 Hz.

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6. The method of claim 4, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at a frequency of about 30 Hz.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at an intensity of less than 1 kilowatt.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at an intensity of less than 1 watt.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at an intensity of about 1 milliwatt to about 1 kilowatt.

10. A method of protecting a target area from termite activity comprising:

positioning an electromagnetic field source capable of emitting an electromagnetic field at a frequency in a range of about 1 Hz to 3000 Hz and at an intensity of about 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt that attracts termites and a termite food source/attractant in a location adjacent to said target area, wherein said termite food source/attractant comprises a termite bait, and wherein said termite bait is a toxic bait; and

emitting an electromagnetic field from said electromagnetic field source at said frequency and at said intensity, wherein said termites are attracted toward said location and away from said target area, thereby protecting said target area from termite activity.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said step of emitting an electromagnetic field further comprises emitting said electromagnetic field at a frequency of about 1 Hz to 300 Hz.

* * * * *



US007707767B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Ragon et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 7,707,767 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **May 4, 2010**

(54) **TERMITE CONTROL SYSTEM, METHOD
AND APPARATUS**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
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(22) Filed: **Dec. 7, 2006**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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filed on Sep. 27, 2005.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

A01M 17/00 (2006.01)

A01M 1/02 (2006.01)

A01M 1/20 (2006.01)

A01M 1/22 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **43/132.1**; 43/124; 367/139

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 43/132.1,
43/124, 107; 367/139

See application file for complete search history.

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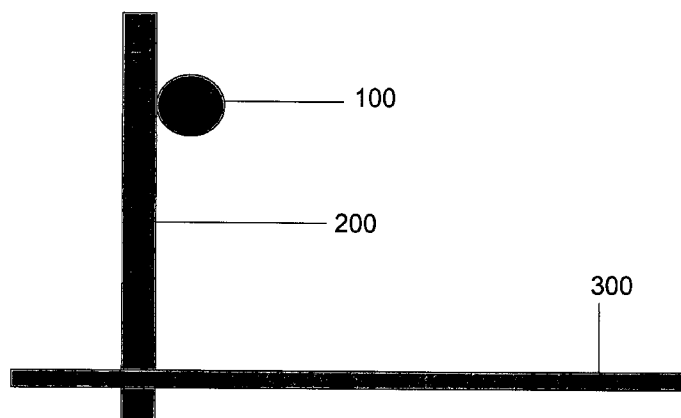
Primary Examiner—Darren W Ark

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Lawrence Arthur Schemmel

(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides a method, system and apparatus for controlling the movement of insects such as termites by using a vibration device that produces mechanical vibrations within a certain frequency range. The frequency range may be chosen to attract or repel. The source may be coupled with insect food sources or other attractants. The present invention can be used to protect a natural or man-made structure from termite infestation. The present invention can also be used for controlling activity of other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

6 Claims, 27 Drawing Sheets



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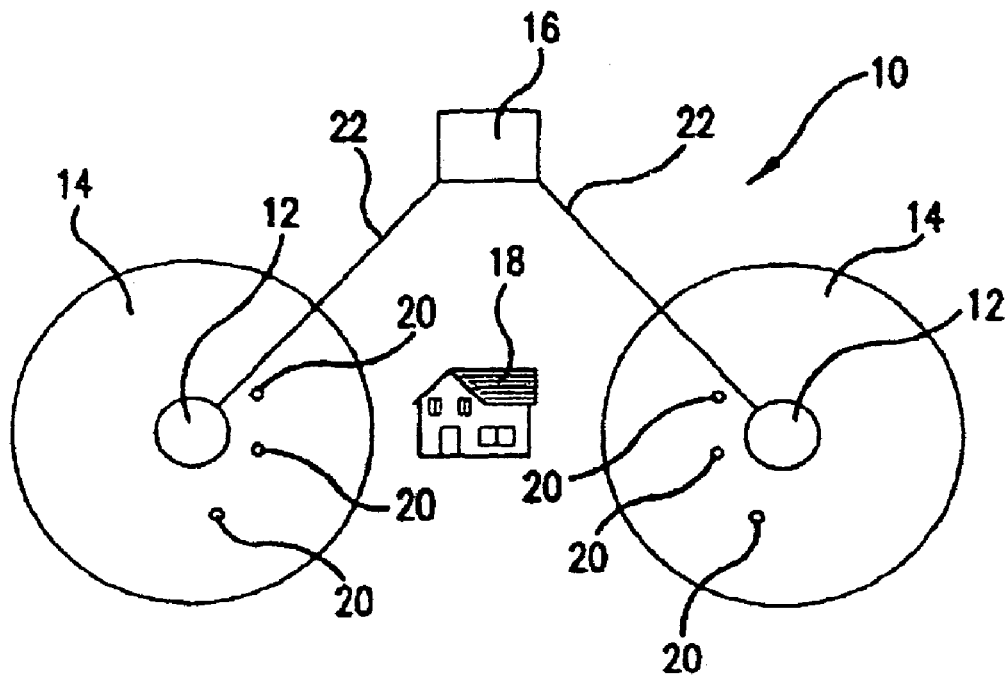


FIG. 1A

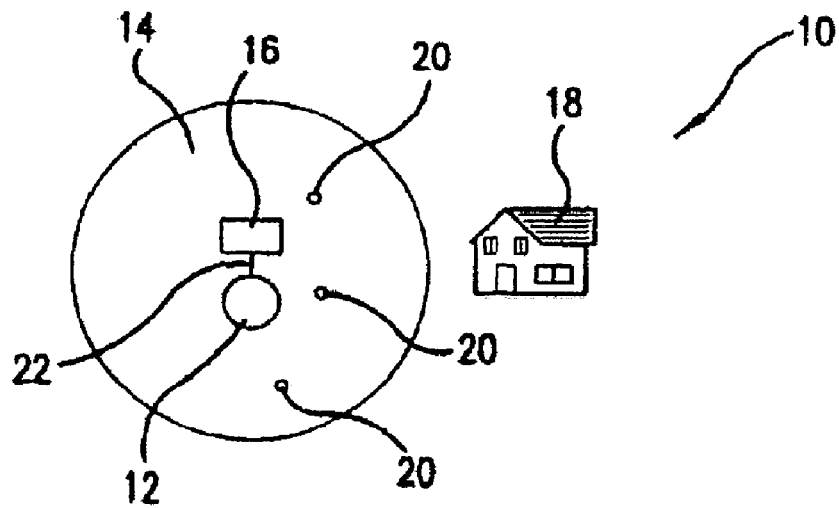


FIG. 1B

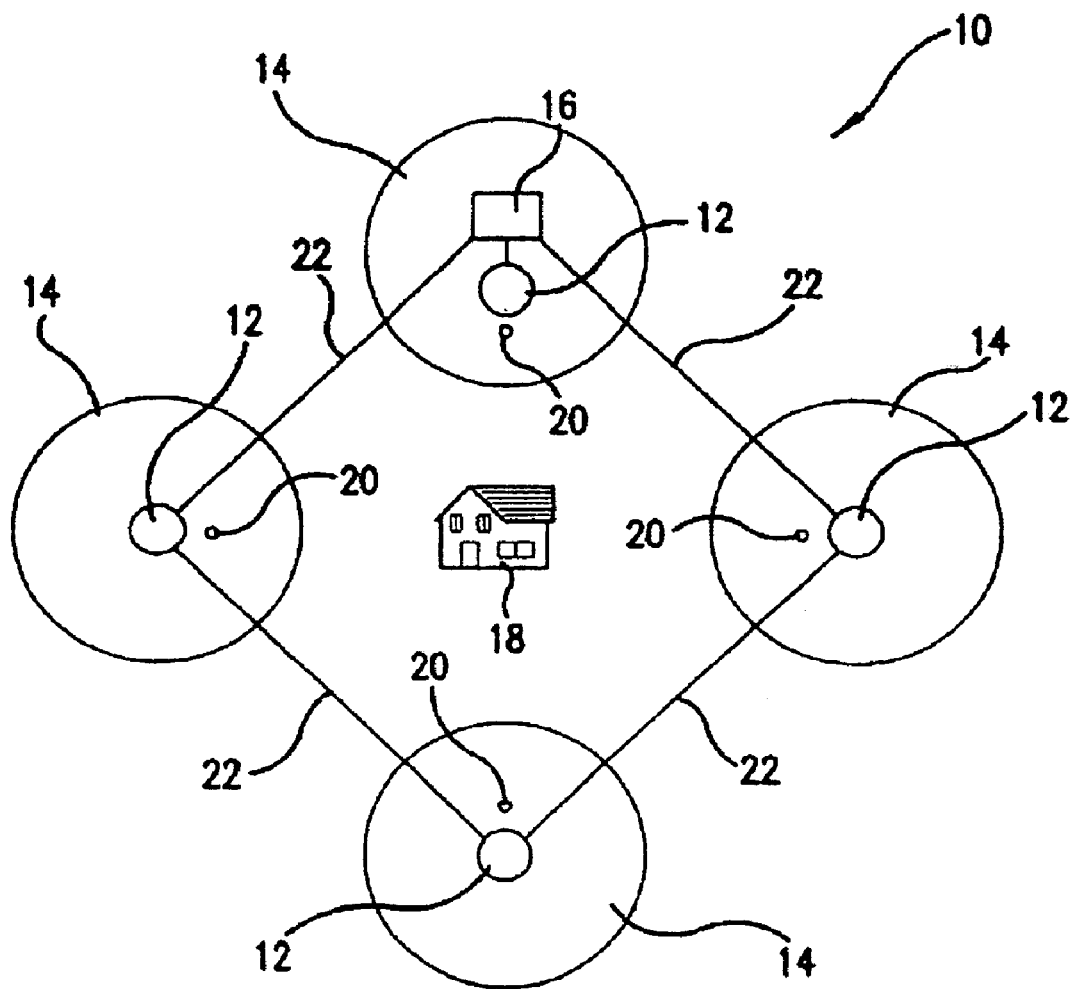


FIG. 1C

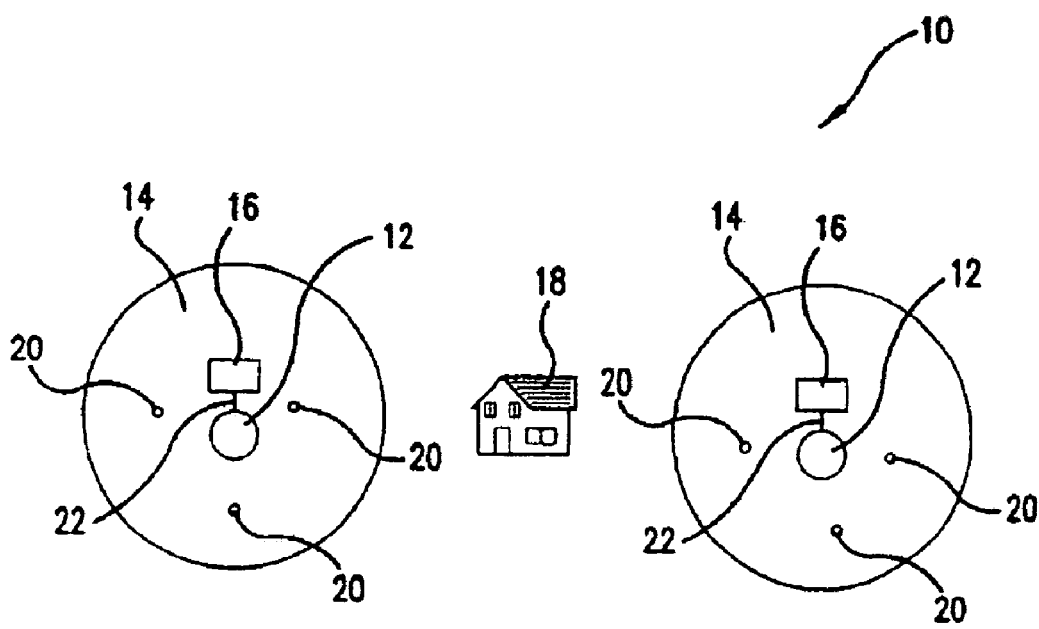


FIG.1D

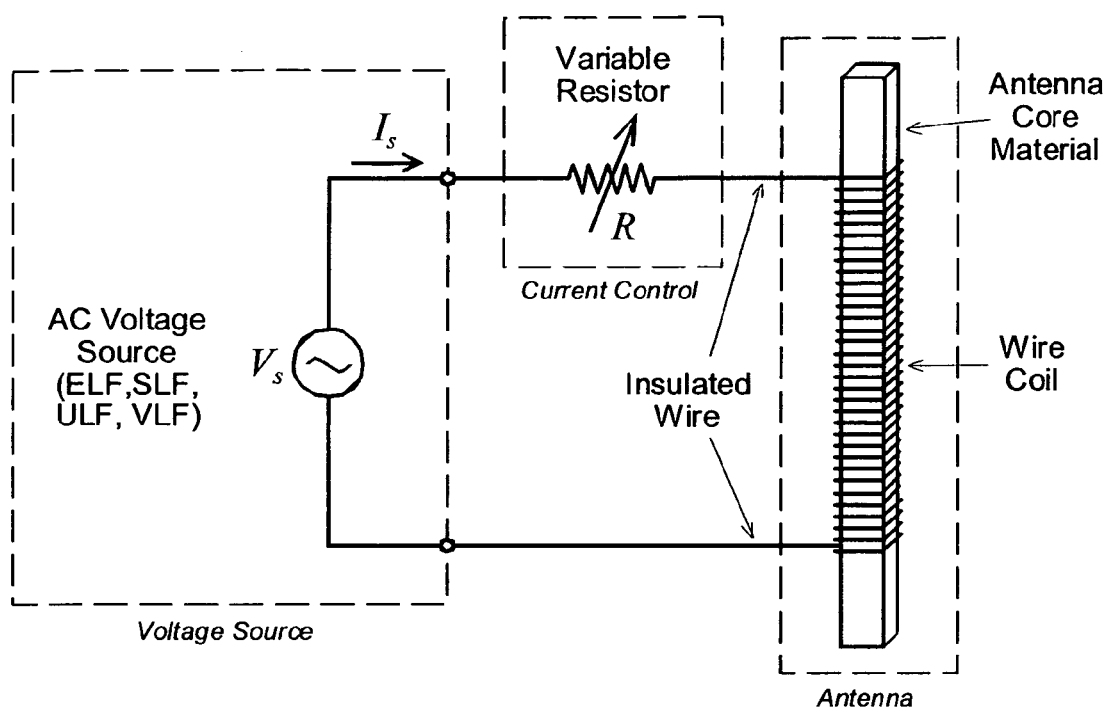


Figure 2

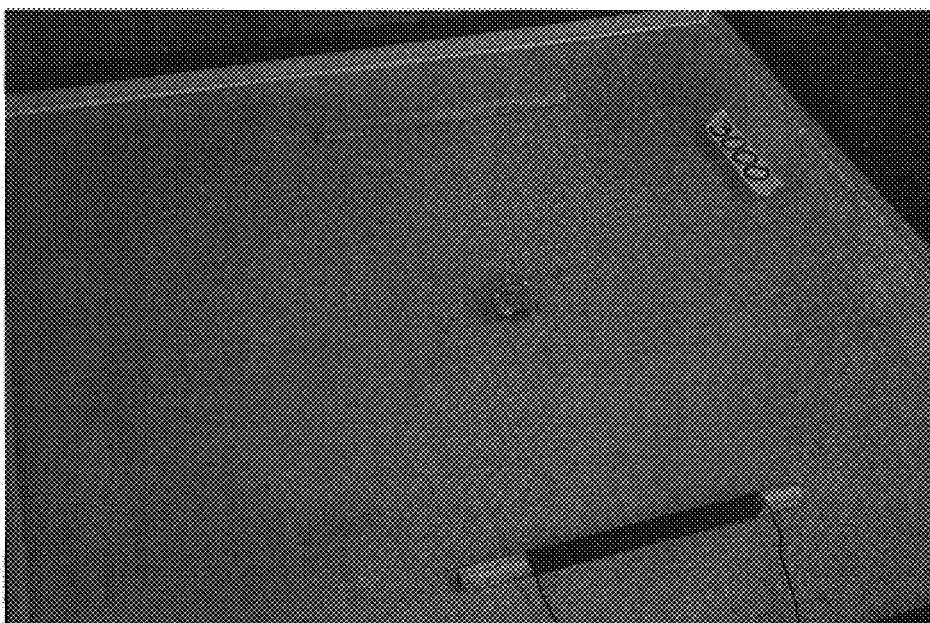


Figure 3

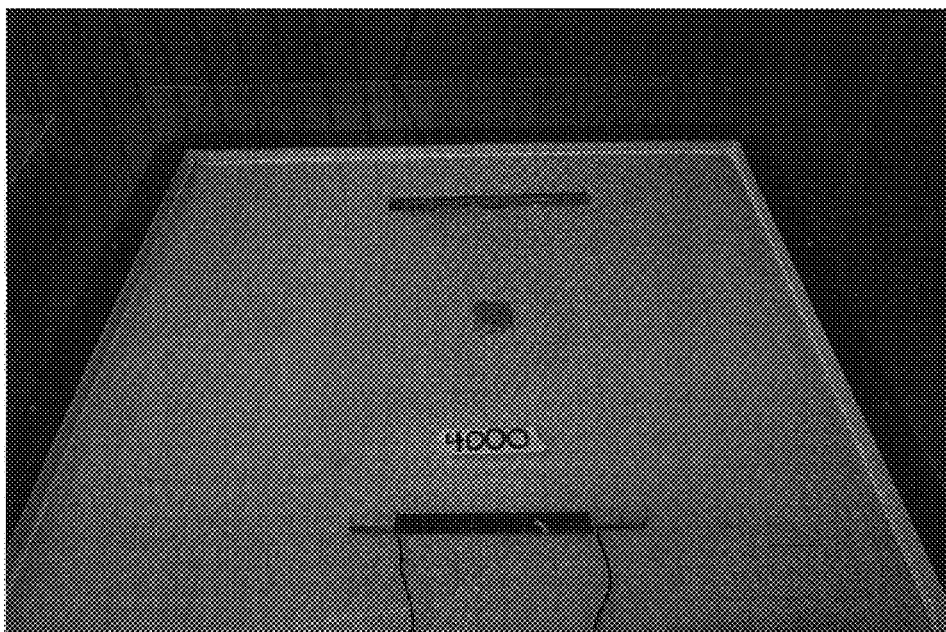


Figure 4

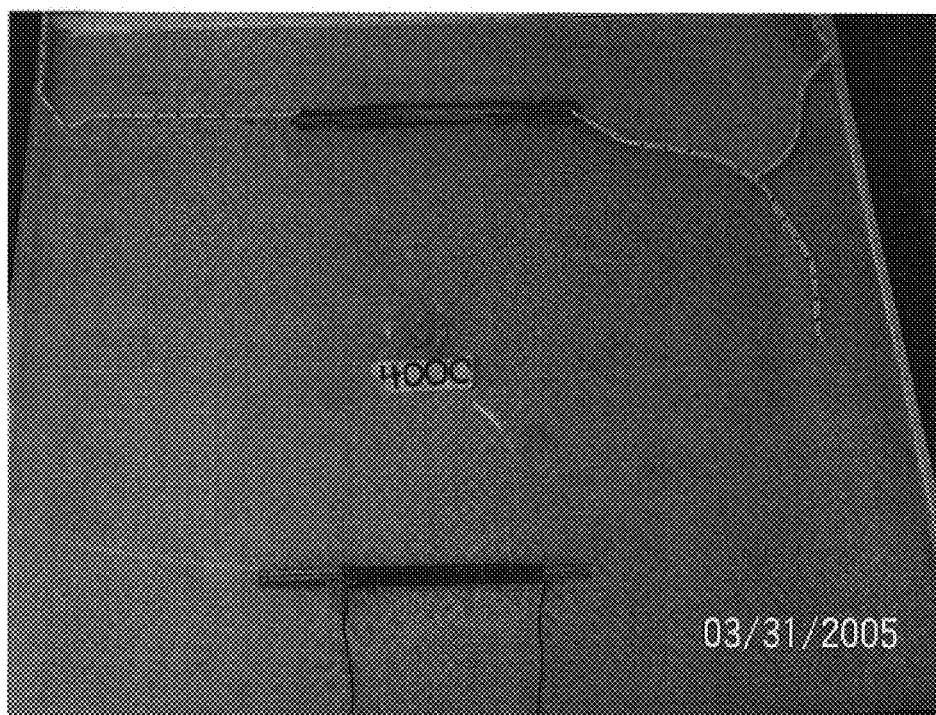


Figure 5



Figure 6

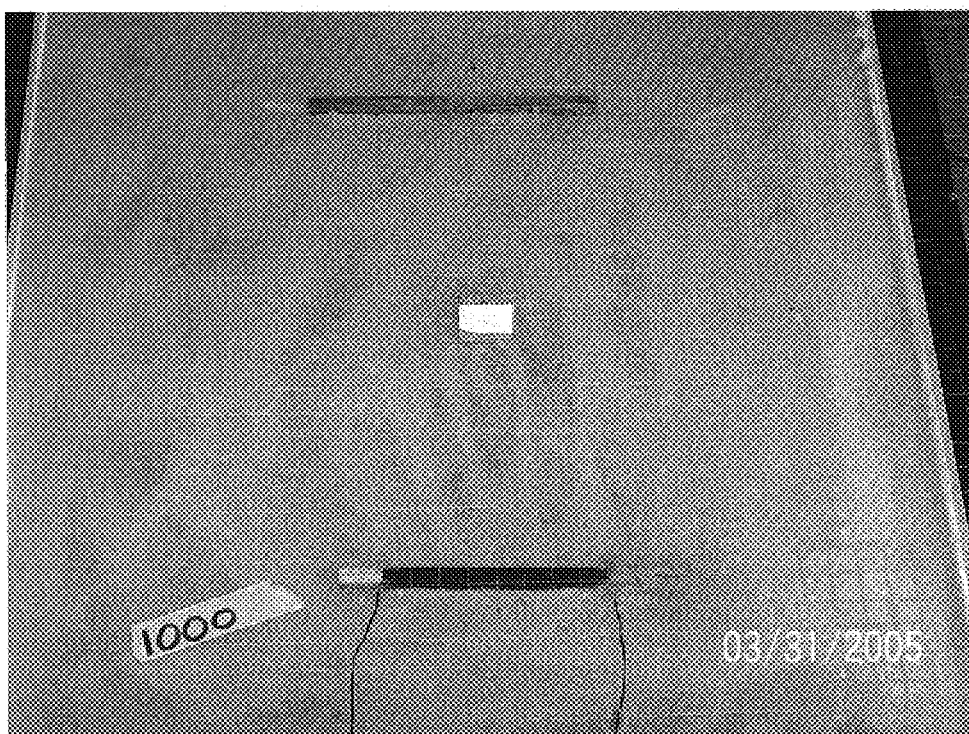


Figure 7

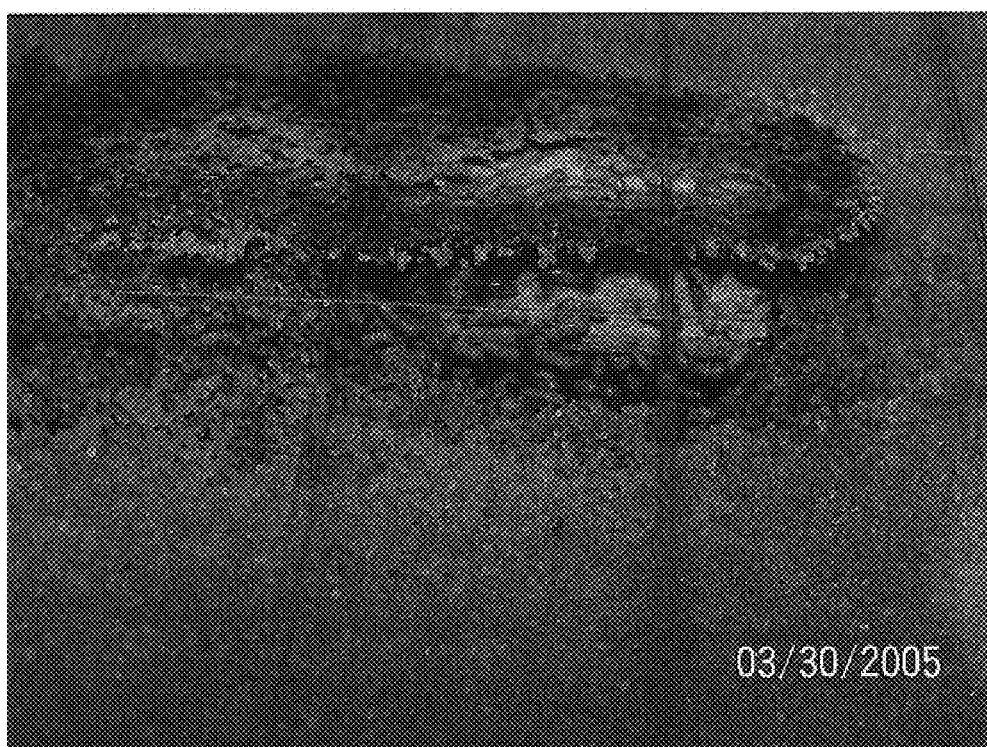


Figure 8

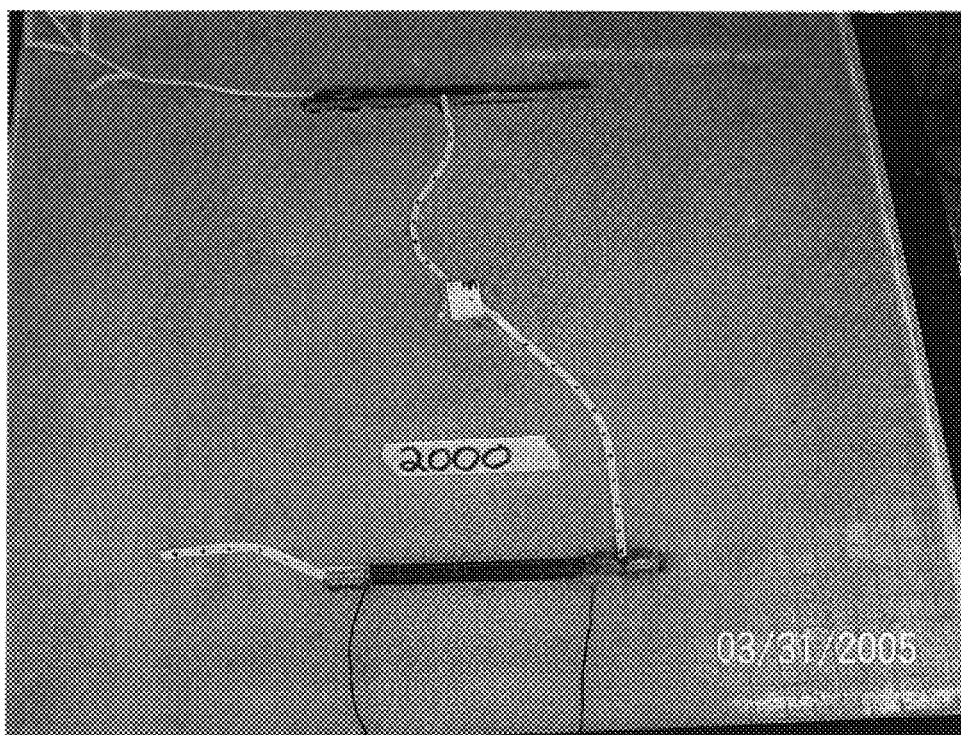


Figure 9

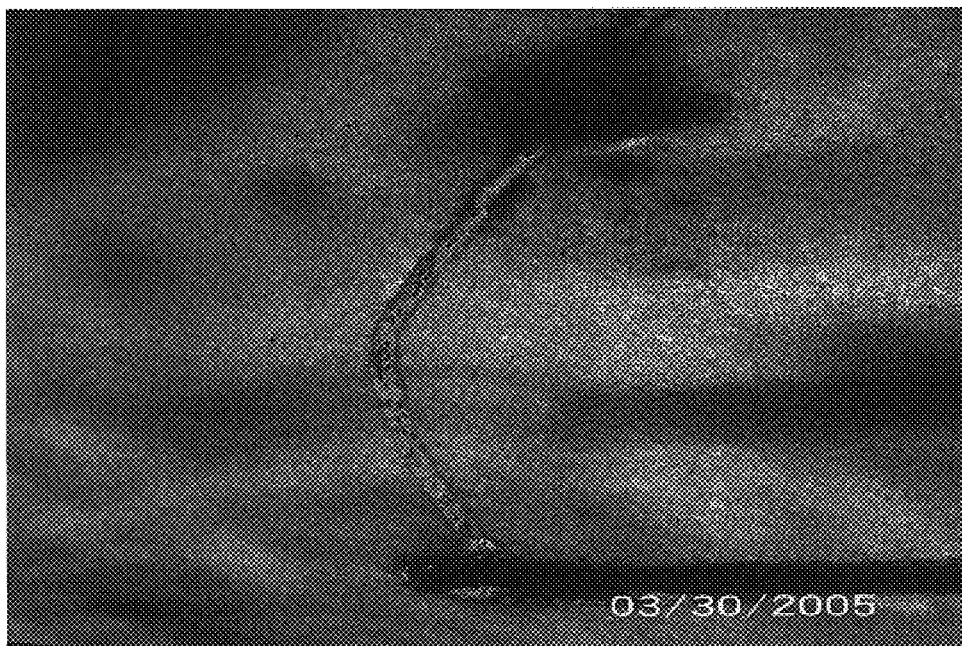


Figure 10



Figure 11

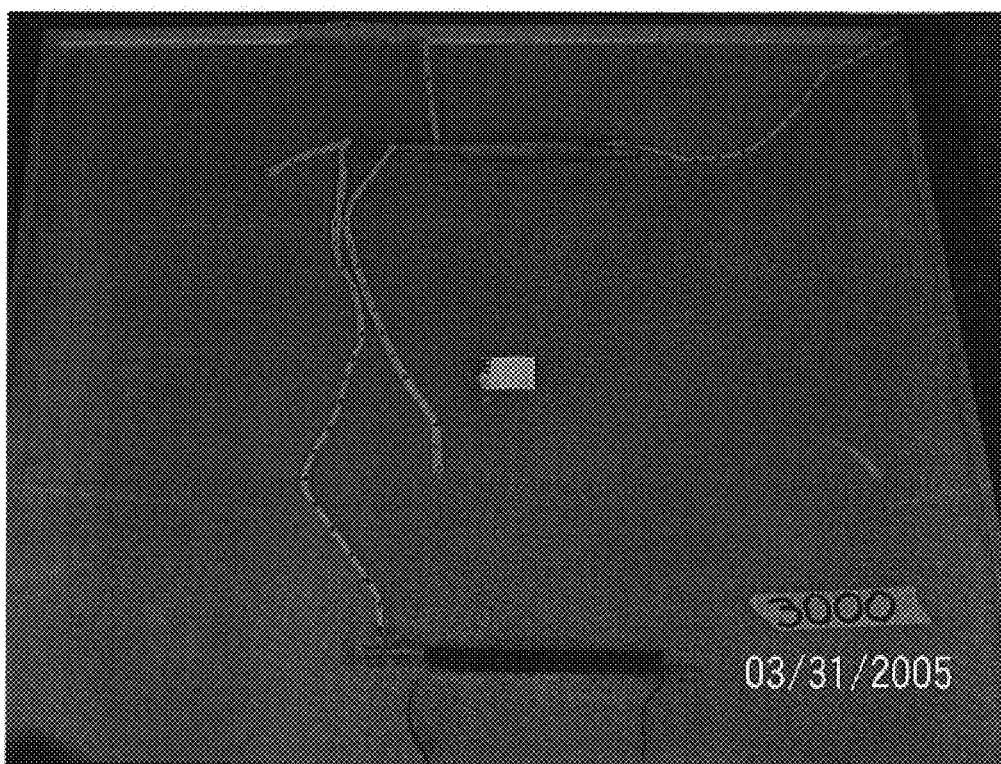


Figure 12



Figure 13

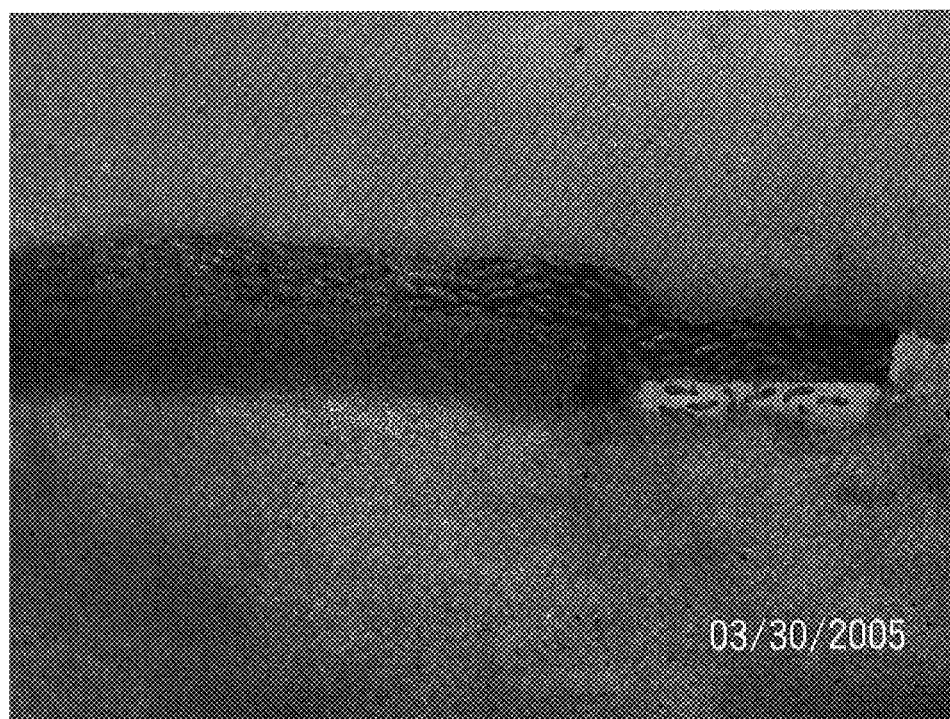


Figure 14



Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17

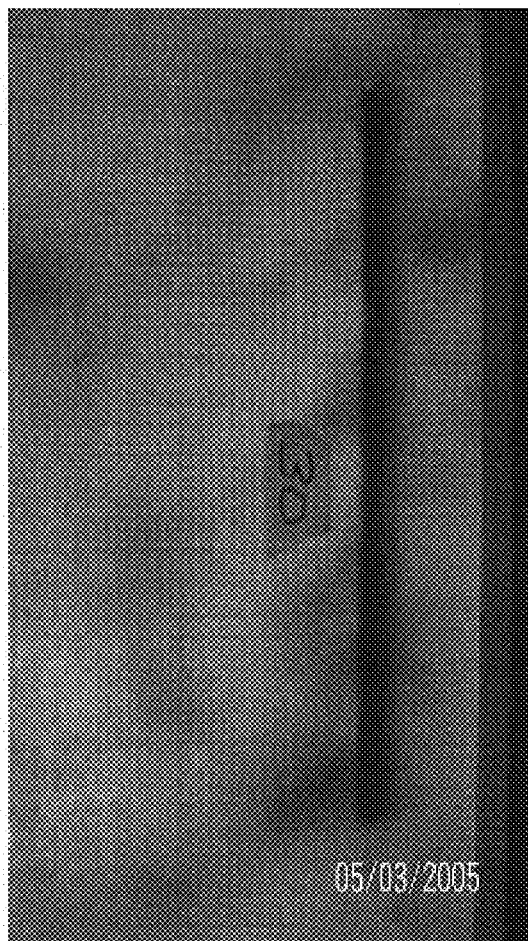


Figure 18A



Figure 18B

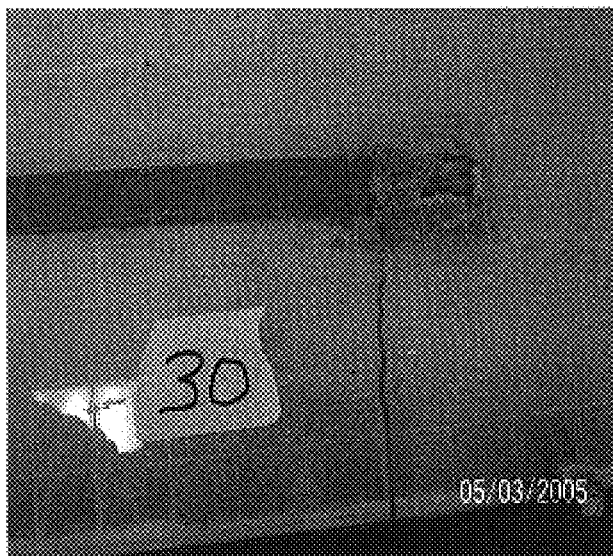


Figure 19A

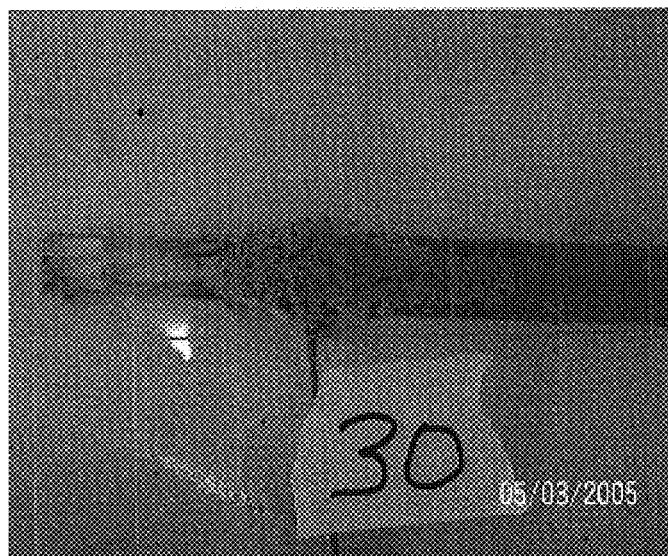


Figure 19B



Figure 20

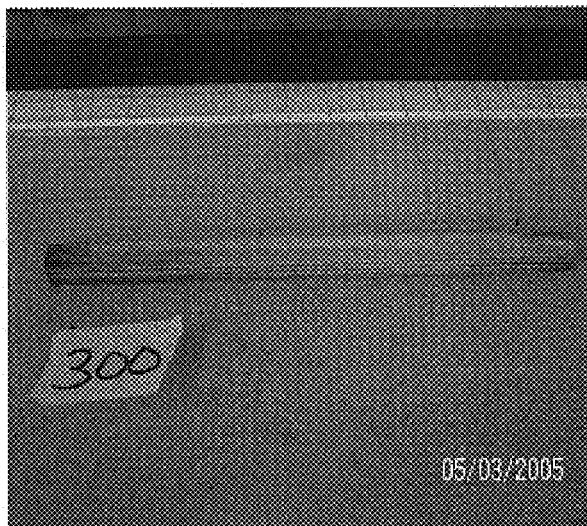


Figure 21A

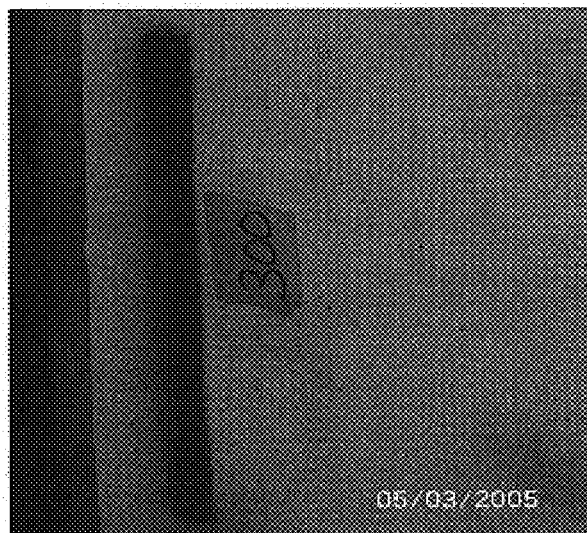


Figure 21B

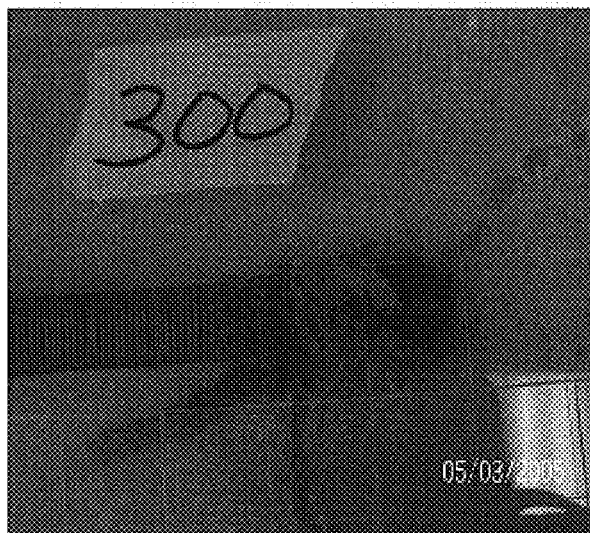


Figure 22A

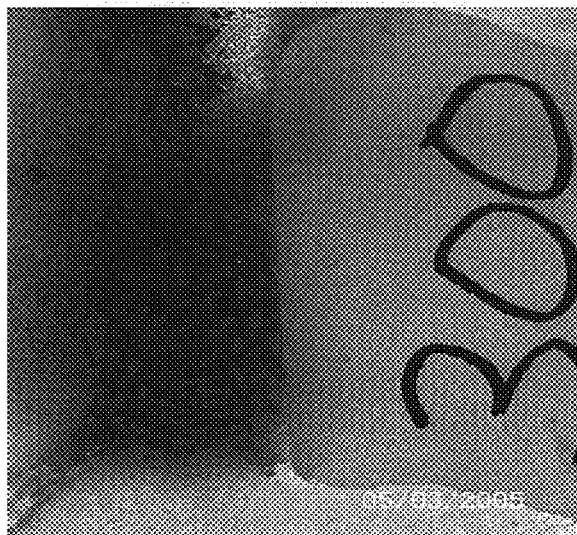


Figure 22B

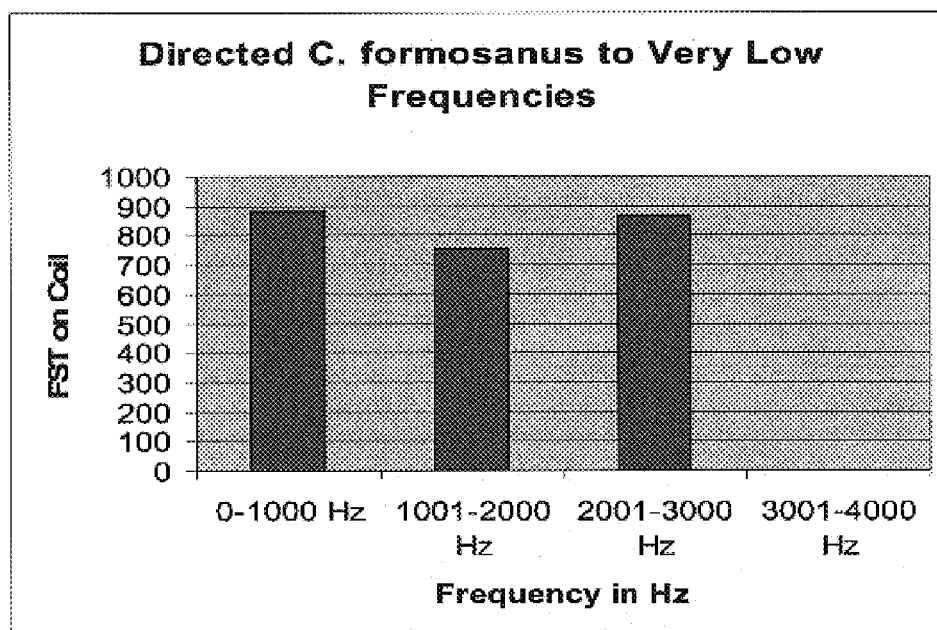


Figure 23

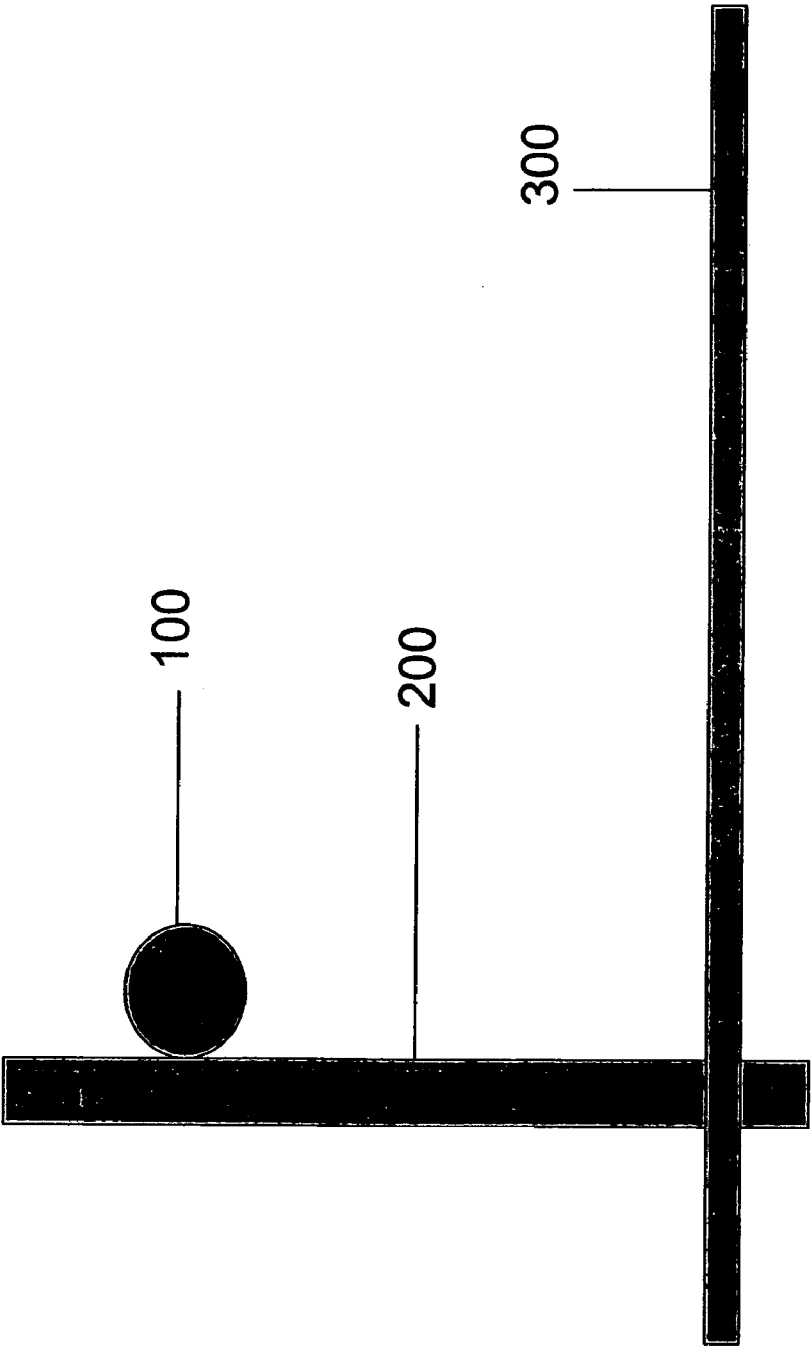


Figure 24

TERMITE CONTROL SYSTEM, METHOD AND APPARATUS

This application is a Continuation-in-part (CIP) of application Ser. No. 11/235,109 Filed on Sep. 27, 2005

This invention was made with Government support under U.S. Department of Agriculture/Forest Service Grant Number 04-JV-1111136-104. The Government may have certain rights in this invention.

BACKGROUND

1. Field

This disclosure relates to the field of insect control technology, and more specifically, to methods and apparatus for controlling termite activity, movement and population using radio waves (e.g., electromagnetic fields) and/or mechanical vibrations within a certain frequency range. The methods and apparatus may be used to protect a structure from termite infestation.

2. Background of the Technology

Untreated termite infestations lead to irreversible structural damage in buildings throughout the world. As a result, a myriad of treatments to control or destroy termite populations have been developed. Because of the potential negative environmental impact of insecticides, environmentally friendly alternatives have been the primary focus of the latest research.

A significant amount of prior art focuses on the use of electromagnetic fields to control (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,473,836, issued to Liu discloses a method for removing insects from "hidden places" by inducing an electromagnetic field to create physical vibrations. U.S. Pat. No. 5,930,946 issued to Mah discloses a method for creating an electromagnetic field to which pests react adversely. U.S. Pat. No. 5,442,876 issued to Pederson discloses a method for controlling termites by heating the area where termites are located to temperatures which are lethal to living organisms by means of electromagnetic energy. U.S. Pat. No. 4,870,779 issued to Bergerioux et al. discloses a method in which a low frequency, randomly varying magnetic field is generated by a device such that it interacts with the earth's geomagnetic field to eliminate (repel) rodents and similar pests located above and below ground level in the area surrounding the device.

The use of electrical energy has also been employed in efforts to eliminate (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,210,719 issued to Lawrence discloses an apparatus and method which uses a sweep-frequency, high voltage generator coupled to an applicator gun for feeding electric power into pest-infested dielectrics, for example termite-infested wood. U.S. Pat. No. 4,366,644 issued to Lawrence discloses a method that involves the application of broadband radio frequency or multi-frequency high-voltage electrical energy to termite shelter tubes, galleries and nests and to the bodies of termites in those areas. The '644 patent describes methods to kill termites directly by electroschock or indirectly by creating interference with the digestive processes of termites. U.S. Pat. No. 4,782,623 issued to Lawrence discloses an apparatus and method, which uses a phase-locked high voltage, high frequency pulse generator capable of "quasi-unlimited" power output and an applicator gun for feeding electric power into pest-infested dielectrics, for example termite infested wood. U.S. Pat. No. 4,223,468 issued to Lawrence discloses a method that involves killing termites by the application of broadband, high voltage electrical energy to habitats of termites.

The application of microwave energy has also been employed in the attempt to control (repel and/or negatively affect) termites. U.S. Pat. No. 5,575,106 issued to Martin et al. discloses a method of using low voltage "microwave horns" to kill termite populations. U.S. Pat. No. 5,896,696 issued to Stokes et al. discloses an apparatus and method for generating and radiating energy at specific wavelengths for the purpose of adversely affecting the nervous systems of "small insects."

While these environmentally friendly methods of controlling termites have avoided the use of conventional pesticides, they have failed to adequately protect termite-susceptible structures from infestation.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,837,001 to Amburgey et al. describes a method to attract termites to a selected area using radio waves and thereby provide protection from termites for other adjacent areas. The frequency of the radio waves ranged from about 1-100 megahertz with intensities 1-100 K watts. While this method has proven to be successful, it requires equipment capable of generating radio waves at high frequencies.

Each of the methods and system discussed above suffer from one or more drawbacks that make their use less than optimal under all circumstances. Accordingly, there exists a need for alternative methods and apparatuses for directing the movement of termites.

SUMMARY

In one aspect, a method for controlling termite movement or population comprises (1) positioning an electromagnetic field source at a frequency of less than 4000 Hz with an intensity of 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt as a termite attractant in the proximity of a target location that is inhabitable by termites and (2) producing electromagnetic fields to attract termites towards the frequency field source and away from the undesired location. The method is also applicable to other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

In a preferred embodiment, the termite attractant comprises a termite-degradable material such as wood. In another preferred embodiment, the termite attractant comprises a toxic bait, a light trap, or a termite trap that is capable of eliminating the attracted termites.

Another aspect relates to a system for controlling termite activity or population, comprising an electromagnetic field source at a frequency of less than 4000 Hz with an intensity of 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt; and a termite attractant comprising a termite degradable material. The system can also be used to control activity of other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps. In a preferred embodiment, the electromagnetic field source comprises a voltage portion and an antenna portion, wherein said antenna portion is mountable on or adjacent to the termite attractant.

Another aspect of the invention employs mechanical vibrations within a predefined frequency range to direct the movement of termites. In some embodiments, the frequency of the mechanical vibrations is chosen to repel termites. In other embodiments, the frequency of the mechanical vibrations is chosen to attract termites. In either of the aforementioned embodiments, the frequency of the mechanical vibrations may be constant or may vary over time within the predefined range. The values of the frequencies in the predefined ranges are dependent on the species of termite. The mechanical vibrations may be produced by any number of methods and devices. In some embodiments, the vibrations are produced by an electric motor having an eccentric cam mounted on the shaft of the motor such that the eccentric cam bears on an object in contact with the ground.

In embodiments of the invention in which the frequency of the mechanical vibrations is chosen to attract termites, the source of the mechanical vibrations is spaced apart from a target site (e.g., a house) to be protected such that termites are drawn away from the target site and toward the source of the mechanical vibrations. In such embodiments, a termite attractant (e.g., food) may be placed near or in contact with the source of the mechanical vibrations. The attractant may be combined with a toxic material in such embodiments so that termites that eat the attractant are killed. In other embodiments, the attractant may be combined with a substance that is a growth inhibitor of the termites that eat it and/or come into contact with it. Multiple mechanical vibration sources may be used in such embodiments when the target site is large.

In embodiments in which the frequency of the mechanical vibrations is chosen to repel termites, the source of the mechanical vibrations is placed in close physical proximity to the target site to be protected. Multiple mechanical vibration sources may be used in such embodiments when the target site is large.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIGS. 1A-1D show diagram representations of different embodiments of the electromagnetic field generating system of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic showing a device capable of generating electromagnetic fields with extremely low frequencies (ELF), super low frequencies (SLF), ultra low frequencies (ULF) or very low frequencies (VLF).

FIG. 3 shows termites at an introduction point of a test chamber.

FIG. 4 shows that there are no termites on a source producing electromagnetic fields at 4000 Hz with an intensity of 1 milliwatt to 1 kilowatt indicating repellency, directing 100% FST to the control in replicated 14-day studies.

FIG. 5 shows VLF 4000 Hz test chamber, there is no FST foraging within 11.5" (29.21 cm) of the #1 source producing electromagnetic fields at 4000 Hz.

FIG. 6 shows a VLF 4000 Hz test chamber, 100% FST are on the control and no FST are on the source producing electromagnetic fields at 4000 Hz.

FIG. 7 shows that, in an ultra-low frequency test chamber, 95% of FST are directed to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 1000 Hz and an average of 88% FST are directed to the electromagnetic field source versus the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 8 is a closer view of the ULF source directing FST to a source producing electromagnetic fields at 1000 Hz.

FIG. 9 is an ULF 2000 Hz test chamber, in which 85% of the FST are directed to a source producing electromagnetic fields at 2000 Hz and an average of 78% FST are directed to the electromagnetic field source versus the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 10 shows, in an ULF 2000 Hz test chamber with a large shelter tube built from the center of the test chamber from the control to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 2000 Hz.

FIG. 11 is an up close view of FST on the source producing electromagnetic fields at 2000 Hz.

FIG. 12 shows, in a VLF 3000 Hz test chamber, foraging to a source producing electromagnetic fields at 3000 Hz from the control in a direct pattern which had 90% of FST directed to the source versus the control and averaged 87% after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 13 shows FST on/in the source producing electromagnetic fields at 3000 Hz.

FIG. 14 shows, in a VLF 3000 Hz test chamber, FST underneath the electromagnetic field source.

FIG. 15 shows, in a VLF 3000 Hz test chamber, the underside of the electromagnetic field source with FST tunneling to the electromagnetic field source.

FIG. 16 is a close up view of the underside of the VLF 3000 Hz test chamber.

FIG. 17 shows an ELF/SLF 30 Hz test chamber with 100% of FST directed to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 30 Hz and no termites on the control after the 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 18A is a bottom view of a control in an ELF/SLF 30 Hz test chamber showing no visible termites.

FIG. 18B is a top view of the control of FIG. 18A in an ELF/SLF 30 Hz test chamber showing no visible termites on the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 19A is a top view of the right side of ELF/SLF 30 Hz electromagnetic field source and FIG. 19B is a top view of the left side of /SLF 30 Hz electromagnetic field source. FIGS. 19A and 19B show termites consuming the wood, filling the coils with sand and chewed plastic from the wire coils in the shelter tubing in the right side photo.

FIG. 20 is a SLF/ULF 300 Hz test chamber showing 100% of the termites directed to the source producing electromagnetic fields at 300 Hz and no termites on the control after 14-day replicated studies.

FIGS. 21A and 21B are the top view and bottom view, respectively, of a SLF/ULF 300 Hz test chamber non-energized control that showed no termite activity after 14-day replicated studies.

FIGS. 22A and 22B are the top view and bottom view, respectively, of a SLF/ULF 300 Hz electromagnetic field source that had 100% of the termite activity after the 14-day replicated studies.

FIG. 23 is a bar graph summarizing the replicated results of the experiments described in FIGS. 3-22.

FIG. 24 illustrates an example of a device attached to a cellulose member that is in contact with the soil, wherein the device is configured to produce mechanical vibrations.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following detailed description is presented to enable any person skilled in the art to make and use the invention. For purposes of explanation, specific details are set forth to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. However, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that these specific details are not required to practice the invention. Descriptions of specific applications are provided only as representative examples. Various modifications to the preferred embodiments will be readily apparent to one skilled in the art, and the general principles defined herein may be applied to other embodiments and applications without departing from the scope of the invention. The present invention is not intended to be limited to the embodiments shown, but is to be accorded the widest possible scope consistent with the principles and features disclosed herein.

The present invention is based on the surprising discovery that termites are attracted by electromagnetic fields in a frequency of less than 4000 Hz. One aspect of the present invention, as described below and shown in the accompanying figures, relates to a method for controlling termites by attracting termites either into a termite control device or to an area away from an infested structure to an area using radio waves (e.g., electromagnetic fields) in the frequency range of 1-3999 Hz.

Electromagnetic fields in the frequency range of 1-4000 Hz can be generated by an oscillator and antenna and is well known to one skilled in the art [Constantine Balanis, "Antenna Theory, Analysis and Design, 3rd. Ed.", John Wiley and Sons, (2005); Warren Stutzmann, et al., "Antenna Theory and Design, 2nd. Ed.", John Wiley and Sons, (1998)]. Depending on the size of a protected area, the power output of the electromagnetic field source can vary from about 1 milliwatt to about 1 kilowatt. As shown in FIGS. 1A-1D, the electromagnetic field generation system, generally shown at 10, can be configured to position at least one electromagnetic source 12 in a transmission area 14. An electromagnetic field generation system 16 is designed to provide electromagnetic fields in the range of 1-3999 Hz within a transmission area 14. As shown in FIGS. 1A and 1C, the transmitter 16 can be operationally connected to more than one transmitting device 12.

The electromagnetic field transmitting system 10 can have varied configurations where the transmitting device 12 can be positioned adjacent to or circumferentially disposed around a natural or man-made termite-degradable structure 18 for which protection from termite damage is desired (FIGS. 1A-D). The structure 18 can have a degradable component and therefore be susceptible to termite damage. The different transmitting system configurations depicted in FIGS. 1A-1D are non-limiting examples, the pattern of which can be widely varied without departing from the concept of the present invention.

Within the effective range of the transmission area 14, natural or man-made termite-degradable materials can be positioned so as to provide a food source 20 for termites that is localized within the transmission area 14. Inclusion of the food source 20, in addition to increasing the effectiveness of the termite-attraction of the transmitting device 12, also provides foci for termite infestation in the transmission area 14. By focusing the relocation of the termites to the food source 20, subsequent containment, collection, or elimination of the termites by conventional means can be facilitated. One skilled in the art would understand that the size of the transmission area 14 is determined by the design and output power of the electromagnetic field 12. The electromagnetic field 12 or antenna portions of the radio wave transmitters 12, as well as the food source 20, should be placed in sufficient proximity of the termite degradable structure so as the food source/attractant directs the termites away from the termite degradable structure.

The termite food source 20 can be anything that attracts termites, including but not limited to, bait stations, termite traps, and light traps. A bait station is typically comprised of a non-biodegradable holder (e.g., plastic) that is placed in the substrate (soil) and holds a cellulose material (termite food/wood or pure cellulose monitoring stake). The bait stations are then placed near a structure (e.g., a house) in areas that are susceptible to termite attack. If termites inhabit the bait station the cellulose material can be removed and a cellulose/toxicant mixture (bait matrix) can be added to the bait station to eliminate the termite colony. Bait stations are commercially available from, for example, Dow Agro-Sciences, Whitmire-Microgen, Bayer. A termite trap is simply a container, such as a bucket with small openings or a milk crate, filled with wood and placed in the substrate near a termite infested site. A termite trap is similar to a bait station but is larger in size and is used to collect termites for laboratory trials. [see e.g., Tamashiro, et al., *Environmental Entomology* 2:721-722 (1973)]. Light traps are generally constructed using a light, a sticky pad (e.g., rodent pad with a strong adhesive for trapping small rodents) and a structure to mount

the two close together to attract Formosan subterranean termite alates (winged termites). More information on the light trap can be found at (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR/archive/oct98/term1098.htm>).

In one embodiment, the food source 20 comprises natural or man-made termite-degradable materials that attract termites away from the structure 18 but do not kill the attracted termites. In another embodiment, the food source 20 comprises materials (such as toxic baits) and/or devices (such as termite traps) that are capable of killing the attracted termites.

The method is applicable to all termite species including, but not limited to, subterranean termites such as *Coptotermes* spp., *Reticulitermes* spp., and Drywood termites (*Cryptotermes*, *Kaloterms*, etc.). species. The method is also applicable to other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps. Unlike conventional remedial termite control methods, the present invention provides a method to control subterranean, surface, and dispersal flight movement of termites before or after infestation of an area in need of protection. The inclusion of attraction augmentation in the electromagnetic field transmitting system 10 of the present invention further permits the localization by directing movement of the termites within the transmission area.

The present invention can be used to attract termites to the transmission area 14 for containment, collection, study, or elimination. By properly positioning the transmitting system 10 relative to a natural or man-made structure 18 for which termite protection is desired, the termites can be attracted away from the material or structure 18 that is to be protected and drawn towards the transmitting system 10. Non-limiting examples of transmitting system configurations which can be used to provide protection for a material or object, such as a house, fence, utility pole, or any material subject to termite infestation are shown in FIGS. 1A-D.

One skilled in the art will recognize that the electromagnetic fields transmitting system 10 can also be used within a termite degradable structure 18, such as a house. In one embodiment, the electromagnetic field transmitting system 10 comprises one or more small electromagnetic field wave transmitters 12 and one or more food source 20 that are capable of killing the attracted termites. The electromagnetic field wave transmitters 12 and the food source 20 are placed near or around a termite infested area within the termite degradable structure 18. The food source 20, with the augmentation from the electromagnetic fields emitted from the electromagnetic field transmitters 12, attract termites away from the infested area and eliminate the attracted termites. The method is described in more detail in U.S. Pat. No. 6,837,001 to Amburgey et al., which is herein incorporated by reference. In one embodiment, the electromagnetic field transmitters 12 are coil shaped antennas capable of generating ELF, SLF, ULF and VLF electromagnetic fields.

FIG. 2 shows an embodiment of a device for generating very-low to extra-low frequency radio waves in a restricted area. The device comprises three basic components: (1) a voltage source, (2) a current control circuit and (3) a coil. As shown in FIG. 2, the alternating current (AC) voltage source Vs produces a sinusoidal voltage at a single frequency within the ELF (3-30 Hz), SLF (30-300 Hz), ULF (300 Hz-3 kHz) or VLF (3-30 kHz) bands. The actual frequency used will depend on the function of the device to attract (3999 Hz-0.0009 Hz) or repel (4000 Hz-6000 Hz) social insects such as termites. The amplitude of the sinusoidal voltage will depend on the designed range of the device for the desired application. The current control circuit consists of a variable resistor R that is used to control the source current Is. The source current passes through a coil that radiates the desired

electromagnetic field at the frequency of the source. The coil geometry shown in FIG. 2 is a multiple-turn loop coil. The coil core material will depend on the application of the device to attract or repel a particular social insect. The multiple-turn loop coil was used in the examples described below. Other coil geometries may also be used.

The present invention is further illustrated by the following examples which should not be construed as limiting. The contents of all references, patents and published patent applications cited throughout this application, as well as the Figures and Tables, are incorporated herein by reference.

Termite Collection

Formosan subterranean Termites (*Coptotermes formosanus*, FST) and Eastern subterranean Termites (*Reticulitermes flavipes*, EST) were collected from and around the Mississippi State University (MSU) Formosan Termite Research Facility and the Stennis Space Center using methods described by Tamashiro et al. [Tamashiro, et al., *Environmental Entomology* 2:721-722, (1973)] and Kard et al. [Kard et al., *Sociobiology* 41:2:295-511, (2003)]. If stored, termites were held at the facility using methods described in the referenced articles.

Test Chamber

Two clear PLEXIGLAS™ sheets 105 cm×105 cm sandwiched a sand media similar to Puche and Su, 2001 [J. Econ Entomol. 94:1398-1404, (2001)]. The PLEXIGLAS™ was separated on four sides by acrylic spacers 2.54 cm×2.54 cm×105 cm. A piece of weathered southern yellow pine sapwood (SYP, *Pinus* spp.) 1.27 cm×1.27 cm×20 cm was used as a control 30 cm from the center termite release point and a source producing electromagnetic fields (very low frequencies, VLF) was attached to a SYP specimen similar to the control and was installed on the opposing side of the termite release point at the same distance. Both pieces of wood were aged by being cribbed-stacked outside for 6 months prior to the use in tests. The PLEXIGLAS™, inside of the spacers, was filled with 1866 g (1200 ml) of pool-sand that was sifted and moistened with a spray of 400 ml of de-ionized water.

Test Method

One thousand termites of either species (FST and EST) were used in each center release test chamber (one termite species per test unit). Each species was used in ratios as they are found in nature. A 20% soldier to worker ratio for FST and a 1% soldier to worker ratio for EST were used. Termites were counted at the end of 14 days to determine which food choice was desired.

In this example, electromagnetic fields of the appropriate frequency were generated using a function generator producing an AC current. The coil was a SYP stake with 18 gauge wire coiled around it in 100 loops. The desired intensity in the first test was 0.720 mA with various test frequencies and doubled for the second set of replicates. Multiple frequencies were tested at one time (one per PLEXIGLAS™ test unit), and replicated in time. These frequencies are listed in Tables 1 and 2.

Testing Results

Recorded results from directing movement of *C. formosanus* using radio waves (e.g., electromagnetic fields) at VLF (3-30 kHz) and ULF (300-3000 Hz) frequencies at Mississippi State University (MSU) Formosan Termite Research Facility in McNeill, Miss. (January-March 2005) are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Mortality for test date Feb. 2, 20005 was high because the termites escaped before 14 days except in the chamber that held the 3000 Hz coil. Therefore, numbers for replicate test one are based on 7 day recordings. Mortality

was 10% for replicate date Mar. 3, 2005 and 5% for replicate date Mar. 16, 2005. Ultra-low frequency (ULF) 1000 Hz had a higher percentage of FST on the coil than any other tested frequency tested in the series of: ULF 2000 Hz, VLF 3000 Hz and 4000 Hz. VLF 4000 Hz never had termites on the coil at the end of the elapsed time of the 14-day test periods. ULF 2000 Hz and VLF 3000 Hz had a higher percentage of FST termites on these VLF and ULF coils than the controls.

Test results for test period Apr. 15, 2005 using SLF and ELF are impressive and are shown in Table 3. Two of the frequencies tested had complete, greater than ULF 1000 Hz, control directing the behavior of FST. SLF of 300 Hz and ELF of 30 Hz had 100% of the termites on the coil after the allotted 14-day time period. Low frequency 30 kHz showed little control over the behavior of the FST, having only one half of the FST (50%) on the coil.

Soldier to worker ratio 20%:80% was attempted with FST throughout the replicates. Cold weather throughout the months of January and February limited available termites. Weather below 40° F. caused the *C. formosanus* to migrate into the ground, and at this temperature termites were occasionally found in the centers of buried, fallen timber. On the mornings of February 17, March 2, and March 16, temperatures were at or below 40° F. which made termites sparse. Therefore, termites that were available were used and noted in tests. The limited amounts of termites made it difficult to obtain the desired number of soldiers, but 800 workers were constant in every experiment. Once termites were placed in the chamber, keeping the chambers sealed with one main respiration vent and a constant room temperature at 85° F. was the best situation for limiting termite mortality, keeping them comfortable throughout the test. Once poured inside the containers, the termites initially dispersed in every direction.

As shown in FIG. 3, the termites found the control wood easily and it appeared that they were eventually "pushed" in large numbers to the control within the first few hours and away from the VLF 4000 Hz source. There were a few termites on the coil initially when the FST were introduced into the test chamber. After a couple of hours, the few termites left the coil and no FST ever returned to the unit for 14-day test period (FIG. 4). In one replicate, the termites tunneled around the perimeter of the chamber (this did not occur in all tests) and never got within 11.5 inches (29.21 cm) of the test unit for test period Mar. 16-05 and did not occupy the shelter tubes at the end of 14-day elapsed time period of the test (FIG. 5). In three replicates, the coil operating at VLF 4000 Hz never had termites (0% of FST) and the control was completely colonized in every replicate (FIG. 6).

Upon introduction into the ULF 1000 Hz test chamber, FST acted very similar as termites had in other test frequency ranges, but slightly more termites accumulated on the coil. After a couple of hours the termites were directed to the coil. At the end of 14-day test period in replicated studies, almost every living termite was on, under or inside the coil (88.8% of FST) as seen in FIGS. (7-8). There was an average of 137 FST on the control wood at the end of the 14-day elapsed test period in the replicated tests seen in FIGS. 7 and 8.

Upon introduction into the ULF 2000 Hz test chamber, the termites initially reacted similar to VLF 1000 Hz except termites would find the control, colonize it and then tunnel back to the middle of the box where they had been introduced. FST would then tunnel to the experimental unit (ULF source). There were more FST on, under, and in the experimental unit (86.6%) than the control after 14-day replicated studies shown in FIGS. 9-11.

The introduction of FST into the VLF 3000 Hz test chambers produced results unlike any of the other experiments.

Once introduced, every FST foraged to the control for almost twenty-four hours. After a day had passed the termites began to forage from the control wood to the VLF coil. On the 14th day of the study, more FST were on, under and in the experimental unit (89.6%) than the control unit in replicated tests shown in FIGS. 12-16.

Based on these results, further tests were performed using SLF at 30 Hz and ELF at 300 Hz. The SLF 30 Hz coil had every living FST in the test chamber on the SLF coil (100% FST on the coil, FIGS. 17-19). ELF 300 Hz coil also directed every living FST to the coil, altering their behavior (100% FST on the coil, FIGS. 20-22). These frequencies as well as the VLF frequencies would be similar to the ones used for tactical submarine communications that have been shown to direct FST behavior.

FIG. 23 summarizes the results from the above-described experiments. Similar results were also obtained with *Reticulitermes flavipes*. As shown in FIG. 23, radio waves (e.g., electromagnetic fields) in the frequency range of 1-3000 Hz are very effective in attracting termites and it is believed that radio waves (e.g., electromagnetic fields) in this frequency range will attract other social insects such as ants, bees and wasps.

An embodiment in which mechanical vibrations are used to direct movement of termites is illustrated schematically in FIG. 24, which illustrates a vibration device 100 that is configured to produce mechanical vibrations in a predefined frequency range. The vibration device 100 is an electric motor configured with an eccentric cam (not shown in FIG. 24) mounted on its shaft. As shown in FIG. 24, the vibration device 100 is attached directly to a termite attractant in the form of cellulose member 200 (e.g., a piece of wood) such that the eccentric cam bears against the piece of wood causing the piece of wood to vibrate at a frequency within a predetermined frequency range. The frequency of the vibrations produced by the vibration device 100 may be a constant frequency in the predetermined frequency range or may vary over time within the predetermined frequency range. In some embodiments, the predetermined frequency range is 30-300 Hz, which the inventors have discovered is effective to attract *R. flavipes* (or EST). In other embodiments, the predetermined frequency range is 1-3,999 Hz, which the inventors have discovered is effective to attract *C. formosanus* (or FST). Preferably, the frequency range is chosen to be attractive to multiple species of termites (e.g., frequencies in the range of 30-300 Hz attracts both *C. formosanus* and *R. flavipes*).

In the embodiment of FIG. 24, the cellulose member 200 is in contact with the soil 300 and is preferably at least partially submerged in the soil 300. The vibration device 100 and cellulose member 200 are preferably positioned such that they are separated from the target site but are close enough to the target site that any termites at the target site will sense the vibrations and move toward them. The actual distance depends upon the condition of the soil and the intensity of the vibrations produced by the vibration device 100.

In some embodiments, a toxic substance is combined with the termite attractant 200 so that termites that ingest the termite attractant 200 are killed. In other embodiments, the termite attractant is combined with a substance that renders the termites sterile, thereby preventing their reproduction.

In the embodiment of FIG. 24, the vibration device 100 is connected to the termite attractant 200 such that the termite attractant 200 vibrates. In other embodiments, the vibration device 100 is not connected to the attractant 200 but is placed in close physical proximity to it. For example, in one alternative embodiment, the vibration device 100 is attached to an object such as a steel rod that is partially submerged in the

ground and a cellulose member is driven into the ground near the steel rod such that termites that are attracted to the vibrating steel rod. In other embodiments, the vibration source is attached to, or integrated with, a bait station, a termite trap or a light trap or some other termite attractant or termite-degradable material.

In other embodiments of the invention, mechanical vibrations are used to repel termites rather than attract them. For example, the inventors have discovered that frequencies in the range of 4,000 Hz-6,000 Hz repel *C. formosanus*, while frequencies between 1 Hz and 29 Hz, and 301 Hz-6000 Hz or greater repel *R. flavipes*. In such embodiments, an object that is not attractive to termites (e.g., a metal rod) or that repels termites is partially submerged in the ground near or in the target site and is attached to a vibration device that is configured to produce mechanical vibrations in a range that repels termites. Preferably, the range is between 4,000 Hz and 6,000 Hz such that both *R. flavipes* and *C. formosanus* are repelled from the target site. As with the previous embodiments, the vibration frequency may be fixed over time or may vary over time within the predetermined range.

TABLE 1

Results from Replicates.		
Frequency (Hz)	Termites/Comments	Date
	Colony in McNeill Down Log	(Feb. 2, 2005)-(Feb. 15, 2005)
4000	800 Workers = 3.31 g 181 Soldiers = 0.66 g (18.4% out of 981)	Termites escaped but escaped away from the test coil. 100% Mortality
3000	800 Workers = 2.95 g 200 Soldiers = 1.01 g (20% out of 1,000)	Termites escaped but about 850 @7-days & 600 @ 14 days were on the coil. 30% Mortality
2000	800 Workers = 3.18 g 200 Soldiers = 0.57 g (20% out of 1,000)	Termites grazed on coil (700-7 days) but left; after 14 days escaped on the coil side. 100% Mortality.
1000	800 Workers = 3.12 g 200 Soldiers = 0.92 g (20% out of 1,000)	Termites grazed on coil (750-7 days) but left after 14 days; escaped on coil side. 100% Mortality
	Colony McNeill Live Tree	(Mar. 3, 2005)-(Mar. 15, 2005)
4000	800 Workers 075 Soldiers (8.6% out of 875)	Termites (787) were all on the control wood away from the coil. Mortality was 10%
3000	800 Workers = 2.95 g 170 Soldiers = 1.01 g (17.5% out of 970)	Termites (742) were on the coil Mortality was 10%. Control = 131
2000	800 Workers = 3.18 g Soldiers = 0.57 g (11.3% out of 910)	Termites (541) were on the coil, Mortality was 15% Control = 107
1000	800 Workers = 3.12 g 082 Soldiers = 0.92 g (9.3% out of 882)	Termites (754) were on the coil, Mortality was 10%. Control = 128
	Colony Derby Train Depo	(Mar. 16, 2005)-(Mar. 30, 2005)
4000	800 Workers = 3.31 g 100 Soldiers = 0.66 g (11.1% out of 900)	No termites were on the coil (855), about 5% mortality
3000	800 Workers = 2.95 g 100 Soldiers = 1.01 g (11.1% out of 900)	Termites on coil (753) with the rest and forth between middle and back control, Mortality 7%. Control = 84
2000	800 Workers = 3.18 g Soldiers = 0.57 g (11.1% out of 900)	Termites on coil (726), Mortality 5%. Control = 129
1000	800 Workers = 3.12 g 100 Soldiers = 0.92 g (11.1% out of 900)	Termites almost all in coil (787), Mortality 8%. Control = 41

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TABLE 2

Summary of Table 1 results.		
Frequency (Hz)	Results (FST attracted to coil)	Date
4000	0	(Feb. 02, 2005)-(Feb. 15, 2005)
3000	85%	
2000	70%	
1000	75%	
		(Mar. 03, 2005)-(Mar. 15, 2005)
4000	0	
3000	85%	
2000	70%	
1000	95%	(Mar. 16, 2005)-(Mar. 30, 2005)
4000	0	
3000	90%	
2000	85%	
1000	95%	February-March
Mean Results		
4000	0	
3000	86.6%	
2000	78.3%	
1000	88.8%	

TABLE 3

Test results for period starting Apr. 15, 2005.		
Frequency (Hz)	Results (FST attracted to coil)	Date
30,000	50%	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)
3000	Top of the test chamber lost its seal and dried out near the coil. About 100 termites remained in the coil despite the low moisture and the rest moved to the control where the moisture was. The power had also been lost for two days during the test.	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)
300	100%	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)
30	100%	(Apr. 15, 2005)-(May 05, 2005)

The above description is for the purpose of teaching the person of ordinary skill in the art how to practice the present invention, and it is not intended to detail all those obvious modifications and variations of which it will become apparent to the skilled worker upon reading the description. It is intended, however, that all such obvious modifications and variations be included within the scope of the present invention, which is defined by the following claims. The claims are intended to cover the claimed components and steps in any

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sequence which is effective to meet the objectives there intended, unless the context specifically indicates the contrary.

Further, the purpose of the Abstract of the Disclosure is to enable the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the public generally, and especially the scientists, engineers and practitioners in the art who are not familiar with patent or legal terms or phraseology, to determine quickly from a cursory inspection the nature and essence of the technical disclosure of the application. The Abstract of the Disclosure is not intended to be limiting as to the scope of the present invention in any way.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for directing movement of termites away from a target site comprising:

connecting a vibration device to an object which is a termite attractant, wherein said termite attractant comprises a termite food, said termite attractant further comprising one of:

a toxic substance in combination with the termite food such that the termites that ingest the toxic substance along with said termite food die as a result, and a substance that causes the sterilization of termites; positioning the vibration device and the object at a point separated from a target site by a first distance such that the object is in contact with the ground; and

activating the vibration device such that it vibrates at a frequency within a frequency range that attracts termites;

whereby termites are attracted toward the vibration device and away from the target site.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating further comprises activating the vibration device such that it vibrates in the frequency range of 30 Hz-300 Hz.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating further comprises activating the vibration device such that it vibrates in the frequency range of 1 Hz-3,999 Hz.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating further comprises activating the vibration device such that it vibrates at a fixed frequency in the frequency range that attracts termites.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of activating further comprises activating the vibration device such that it vibrates at a frequency that varies over time within said range of frequencies that attract termites.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of placing said termite attractant within a second distance of the vibration device, the second distance being smaller than the first distance.

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